CHAPTERS ON HOLINESS:

EXPOSITORY AND PRACTICAL.

JOHN HARTLEY.

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CHAPTERS ON HOLINESS:

EXPOSITORY AND PRACTICAL.

BY THE

REV. JOHN HARTLEY,

Author of "Hid Treasures," &c.

"I STAND AT THE DOOR OF THE TEMPLE WITH MY TORCH; IF YOU WOULD VIEW ITS GLORIES, ENTER IN, AND THERE DWELL FOR EVER."—*Bp. Horne.*

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Preface.

ABOUT one third of the following pages have already, in different ways, appeared in print. Many testimonies to the use of them made by the Divine Spirit, and requests that they should be put into a more permanent form, have induced the writer to issue this little work. It has no pretensions to be regarded as an exhaustive or distinctively theological treatise. Questions on the subject, of a metaphysical, or rather psychological character, are passed by. To discuss them, even if there had been the consciousness of the requisite ability, would have been foreign to the writer's design. This is simply to help devout and thoughtful Christians to understand what the will of the Lord is; and to stimulate and encourage them to obtain this fulness of blessing.

The second chapter was published anonymously in *The King's Highway*. As some ministers may look into this volume, it has been reprinted here.

WESLEYAN COLLEGE, HANDSWORTH,
April, 1883.

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CHAPTER I.

Incentives to the Pursuit of Holiness.

"Pitch thy behaviour low, thy projects high;
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be.
Sink not in spirit: who aimeth at the sky
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree."

Geo. Herbert.

"He that desires not to be perfectly holy is not sincerely holy."—*Rd. Alleine.*

"LET us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it," cried Caleb among the thousands of Israel, to inspire them with courage, enterprise, and faith. They had come to the borders of the promised land. The men sent up to reconnoitre it had returned, bringing with hem a sample of its rich and plenteous fruit. They were one in their report of the goodliness of the land. But ten of the number did not think it possible that their tribes could conquer the teeming and warlike people that dwelt in it. They had fortified cities. They abode in mountain fastnesses. They themselves were "strong." And moreover "the children of Anak" were there. While these things were dwelt upon, the spirit of fear chilled the hearts of the multitude, and murmurs began to arise against Moses and against the Lord. Then Caleb, the man of "another spirit," stepped forward, and by his dauntless and heroic bearing awed the craven throng to peace. "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. xiii. 30).

Charles Wesley, in some of his most beautiful and spirited strains, has sung of "perfect love" as

> "A land of corn and wine and oil,
> Favoured with God's peculiar smile,
> With every blessing blest;

There dwells the Lord our Righteousness,
And keeps His own in perfect peace
And everlasting rest."*

And then, his whole soul kindling with desire, and endeavouring to emulate Caleb's valiant spirit, he exclaims—

"Oh that I might at once go up!
No more on this side Jordan stop,
But now the land possess."

If we have been brought out of the Egypt of darkness, bondage, misery, and sin, do we not sympathise with these aspirations? do not our hearts burn with the same desires? We would fain hearten and animate each other. We would say to those who with us have, in God's great mercy, been led through the wilderness to Canaan's bounds, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Dropping such allusive language, our wish is to incite fellow-Christians to an earnest, prayerful, and believing pursuit of Scriptural Holiness. And for the following reasons:—

I. A HIGH AIM IS OF ITSELF A GOOD. It stimulates to exertion. It calls forth energy. It sustains under difficulties. Generally speaking, the character will be moulded after the ideal contemplated and proposed. No man rises higher than the standard which he sets before himself. Hence writers on practical religion, who have not held what we deem Scriptural views as to the

* WESLEY: Hymn 404.

attainableness of perfect love in this life, have yet urged their readers to seek it and pray for it *as if it were attainable.* They did not see how the laws of the human mind forbid this; but they felt of what supreme importance it is to have a high and sacred ambition in religion. Whoever would gain the better blessings of the covenant, must eagerly and persistently reach forth to them. Whoever would rise above the world, with its leaden influences and baleful vapours, must, at least, *strive to soar.*

Even supposing, for a moment, that our efforts to obtain entire sanctification were to a great extent unavailing, yet they could not have been made without signal advantage to our souls. The reflex influence of them would have proved most blessed. Our growth in grace would by this means more rapidly and steadily proceed. Is it conceivable that, if your soul follow hard after this great salvation, if you pant and pray to be made perfect in love, if you are daily longing and expecting the Lord to come and take full possession of your heart, all this should not raise you into a higher state? Even before all your hopes are realised, a higher tone will be given to your piety, the pulses of Divine love will beat more vigorously, and your course will be more uniformly upward and heavenward.

II. HOLINESS IS INTRINSICALLY MOST DESIRABLE.

The appeal is made to those who are no strangers to the grace of God. And one of the effects produced by its reception was to make you feel *sin to be exceeding sinful.* It caused you to

loathe all the "filthiness of the flesh and the spirit." There is now a deep displacence at all iniquity; an utter abhorrence of it. Your spirit recoils from all contact with it, and contamination thereby. One would think that you needed no persuasion to be altogether rid of your shame. You struggled to have evil *subdued*, sometimes crying out in bitter anguish, "Who will deliver me?" Why do you not seek, and strive, and long, and pray to have evil *destroyed?* Why are you not intensely anxious to have every shred of the garment spotted by the flesh taken off and cast away from you?

Then again: you have been captivated by *the beauty of holiness.* Like the righteous Lord after whom you have been created anew, you "love righteousness." To your purged vision, nothing seems so bright and blessed. Your rectified, refined, spiritual taste delights in it. Incomparably fair are the robes of salvation in which Jesus clothes His own, His image enstamped upon the soul, the ripe and clustering fruit of the Spirit, and full conformity with God's will. No charms are so dear to you as these. How, therefore, can you endure that this beauty should be at all blemished or marred? God Himself is "glorious in holiness." Should not we supremely desire to be like Him? Should not we ardently, eagerly covet to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect?

III. PERFECT HOLINESS WOULD PROMOTE OUR SPIRITUAL SAFETY.

When the seeds of disease are in the body, outward causes may soon provoke its development. Any one of consumptive habit, *e.g.*, cannot bear exposure, fatigue, or sudden changes of temperature. But where there are physical soundness and exemption from predisposing causes of sickness, such things might leave a man unhurt. Is it not thus with the soul's life? Where it is languid and feeble, where the "seed of sin's disease" is not removed, we the sooner receive damage and detriment from contact with the world; we are injuriously affected by the evil around us; we are hurt by breathing a tainted atmosphere. When "the things which remain are ready to die," it is hard work to keep them alive at all. But, on the other hand, when the corruption that festered within is dried up; when, at the touch of the great Healer, the fever of passion and pride and self-will has left us; when the pulse of the soul is no longer intermittent or feeble; when we have robust energy and perfect health; when we rejoice in the "more abundant life" which Jesus came to bestow: then we are not injured by toil, by exposure to the world, or by the restorative discipline to which we are subjected. So far from hurting us, these things brace and strengthen our souls.

In this regard, let us consider the question, *What gives temptation power over us?* Is it not the existence of remaining evil within? The wily foe finds that to which he can appeal, and on which he can lay hold. But for allies in the heart, how comparatively safe amid all his assaults

should we be! "Salvation" hath God appointed for "bulwarks," and the fuller the salvation enjoyed by us, the more impregnable the bulwarks. The beleaguering host have within the citadel traitors who sympathise with them; is it surprising that the gates are sometimes thrown open, and sad ravage and desolation ensue? "The prince of this world cometh," said the Master, "and hath nothing in Me" (John xiv. 30)—nothing that would take sides with him, or seize the bait he threw, or assimilate his proposals. Oh, could we but in our measure adopt such language, how almost unhurt should we be! When he cometh to us, he finds much lurking within that is in harmony with himself; hence he gains fatal power over us. What fascination is there in sin to a heart filled with perfect love? A lighted taper plunged into one kind of gas is immediately extinguished; applied to another, this ignites and explodes. There is remaining evil in our souls, and therefore temptation inflames desire, and kindles the conflagration which destroys the precious fruits of righteousness.

Not unfrequently do those who are seeking entire sanctification falter from the fear of losing it. How shall I keep it? they tremblingly say. Not now to insist on the fact that the blood which cleanses can keep us clean, and He who sanctifies wholly can preserve us blameless, there is this other fact that in the very nature of the case we are far, far less likely to be overcome of evil when made pure within, than when our sanctification is only partial. If the heart be wholly

surrendered to Christ, and stayed on Him, you will be kept as the apple of His eye and hid in His pavilion; but what if you tolerate rivals to Him within your breast? The lukewarm, the half-hearted, easily turn again to folly; but they who "always abound in the work of the Lord," because their love is made perfect, are "steadfast, unmoveable."

IV. PERFECT HOLINESS INSURES PERFECT PEACE.

It is assumed that the reader knows by experience how "the kingdom of God is . . . peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Set up in your heart, it has brought you real happiness. It has given a holy calm to your spirit, a strangely sweet and solemn joy, a hope elevating and glorious. But why are these at all marred or interrupted? Why have you not a settled tranquillity? Why is not your "peace as a river," ever flowing and full? Why do you not always abound in hope? Why cannot you "rejoice evermore"?

It is because religion has not undisputed and constant sway. You fail sometimes in the discharge of duty; and then, instead of having as your rejoicing the testimony of a good conscience, you are mortified with yourself and troubled. Unhallowed feelings and propensities, which though subdued are not extirpated, stir within, and thus the atmosphere of your soul is disturbed and darkened. There cannot but be dissatisfaction when the consecration to God is not entire and constant. Where He is not our supreme joy, our portion, our all, but we pine inordinately after

creature happiness, then is there unrest. We make idols, and we find them clay. What we would enjoy apart from God is either emptied of its power to gladden, or embittered, or taken from us.

But when the tumult of sinful desires is stilled; when we are purged from the filth of self and pride; when sin, inward sin as well as outward, is abolished; when no one disputes the throne of the heart with its rightful, blessed Lord; when, by the power of an indwelling Redeemer, we do always the things that please God: our happiness is pure, constant, deep. We find untroubled repose in God. The mind that is stayed on Him as its strength, its salvation, its centre, its rest, has *perfect peace.*

What weariness, insupportable languor, acute pain, and exhaustion accompany disease! But if the body is in perfect health, indefinable physical enjoyment, buoyancy, and energy are felt. And in proportion as sin exists within will there be disquietude and misery. But where a man is made perfectly whole, and the heart is sound in God's statutes, and a robust and athletic spiritual energy always prevails, then you could as soon separate sound from the wind, or light from sunbeams, as hinder the man from having high, sacred, and deep enjoyment. If the walk be close with God, the frame will be calm and serene. "The secret of having a heart always melted with love and tenderness is an indwelling Christ, from whose fulness our cup of blessedness may perpetually flow."

How cheering and impressive are the testimonies borne by such as have been perfected in love to the rest of soul and joy unspeakable which they have possessed! Thus John Fletcher: "I thank God I am not afraid of any evil tidings; my heart stands calm, believing in the Lord, and desiring Him to do with me whatsoever He pleases. . . . Thank God! I enjoy uninterrupted peace in the midst of my trials, which are sometimes not a few." So another: "God gives me, from day to day, the pledge and foretaste of glory everlasting. I eat and drink abundantly of the rich provisions of His love. He grants, not only 'the faith which sees the feast,' as Baxter says, 'but the love which tastes it;' and this love is salvation."* "I know nothing," wrote Mrs. Cryer, "of elation of spirits; I am not aware that I ought to say I have any rapturous joy: and yet I have a rejoicing deep and full, beyond anything I formerly possessed."

Is not this great peace the promised heritage of all God's people? Why should we be strangers to it? Why should our happiness in religion be marred and broken? Why should we not have a constant calm? Let us go up at once into this goodly land. What liberty is there possessed! What pure enjoyment reigns! What breezes from heaven come over it! What refreshing dews fall!

> "Rivers of milk and honey rise,
> And all the fruits of paradise
> In endless plenty grow."

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* *Life of Mrs. Pickford*, p. 196.

Oh, why should we linger another day in the wilderness below? "*Blessed* are the pure in heart" (Matt. v. 8). "These things write we unto you, that *your joy may be full*" (1 John i. 4).

V. PERFECT HOLINESS WILL HELP TO QUALIFY US FOR THE HIGHEST USEFULNESS.

Is there any such hindrance to our being a blessing to others as remaining sin? They are weighty words penned by William Edward Miller, that singularly beautiful and consistent example of Christian perfection: "We are doing something here. . . . I have fresh tokens of my being in my right place. . . . But I begin to see more fully into the Lord's design, and I perceive the wisdom and goodness of God in His dealings. *I have not been willing to be nothing—willing to be quite a fool for Christ; but I now see* [*that*] *to be useful, pride must be fully subdued.*" Would that every labourer in God's vineyard seriously pondered the fact, that so long as this and other characteristics of the carnal mind exist, it would not be safe for ourselves, nor consistent with God's supreme glory, for us to witness extensive fruit of our toil! Being lifted up with pride, we should fall into the condemnation of the devil. God will not give His glory to another.

In striving to promote the salvation of others, we are but *instruments* in the Master's hand. Undoubtedly, the efficiency of an instrument mainly depends upon him who uses it. Here, "the excellency of the power" is "of God, and not

of us." But has not the *adaptation* of the instrument something to do with the result? The clearness and elegance of the writing in part depend upon the pen used. Even the touch of genius could not transform the marble into a thing of beauty without proper tools. McCheyne wrote to a brother minister: "How diligently the cavalry officer keeps his sabre clean and sharp! Every stain he rubs off with the greatest care. Remember, you are God's sword. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God. It is not great talents that God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus."

We are *channels* through which Divine grace is conveyed to men's souls. How sad when the channel is choked by remaining corruption, by pride, by low and sinister aims, by selfishness and earthliness, and by other hidden evils! Were all these taken away, then a full tide of heavenly life might pour along, and carry blessing to many around.

We are *witnesses* of the truth. And when we fully embrace it and yield to it; when we realise all its transforming and sanctifying power; when our perceptions of it are not vague and shadowy, but clear and full: then do we speak of it with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. What a difference between "the mechanical, lifeless declaration by parrot lips of unfelt truth" and the "burning words which utter all the soul," when that soul is baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire! It is these latter that we want: from parents in the nursery and by the fireside; from teachers and leaders in

the class-room; from Christians in the busy haunts of life; from ministers in the pulpit.

We are *intercessors* for others. But it is the princes of God, Israelites indeed, that have power with Him. It is not with a shrivelled arm that you can take hold of His strength; not on a feeble, broken pinion that you can rise to the throne above. Remaining sin must diminish the prevalence of our pleadings for the salvation of men. The heart which is not yet wholly sanctified may be aroused into concern for others; as, *e.g.*, by the dangerous illness of an unconverted relative. Then it would fain pray with power, with "the effectual fervent prayer" that "availeth much." How is this rendered almost impossible by the general feebleness of its tone, and by the unbelief which so often blinds and paralyses!

Besides, it is only eminent and consistent piety which will impel us to constant efforts for the salvation of others. What is easy, showy, public in Christian work, may, it is true, be done even when religion is at a low ebb. But even this will be in a careless and ineffectual manner; and it will form the sum of our endeavours to be useful. A mother may take her children with her to the house of God; but unless she richly experience the vitality and blessedness of religion, she will seldom or never speak to them of their souls' welfare, or pray with them alone. A youthful disciple may be regular as a Sunday-school teacher; but if he is not *constrained* by the love of Christ, he will content himself with mechanical routine, and fail to beseech and urge his class to bear the yoke

in their youth. To deal closely and faithfully with those that are without, we must be sustained by steady, pure, and lofty principle; their souls must be loved as with a passion.

Would you, dear Christian reader, be a power among men for their good? You must yourself be first endued with "power from on high." Would you persuasively speak for God? The live coal from off the altar must touch your lips, your iniquity be taken away, and your sin purged. Would you be the means of adding much people unto the Lord? You must become, like Barnabas, "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Would you win souls to Jesus? *Follow holiness.* Many and many a time has it been seen that those who have entered into the enjoyment of perfect love have from that day run a career of especial usefulness. Take the following example: A young business man of variable religious experience was led, while with some who evidently walked in an atmosphere of Christian love and victory over the world to which he was a stranger, to feel his need of full salvation. One evening, after an address on the soul's union with Christ, he was asked, "Do *you* need such a life?" His prompt reply was, "I do, indeed." "And are you ready to trust Christ for a full sanctification?" "I feel that I am." Then came the searching question, "When?" By the help of Divine grace, he answered, "*Now.*" The Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that time forward in glorious power. Work for God was undertaken, and wondrous results followed. He was like a

flame, lighting every circle he touched, and thenceforward he became a signal blessing to others.

Oh! if all God's people were thus purified from self and sin, filled with compassion for those out of the way, on fire with heavenly love, and wholly consecrated to God, what mighty influence would they exert! With great power would they give witness for their Master. Their intercessions on behalf of the ungodly would prevail with heaven. Immortal souls would, by their instrumentality, be rescued from ruin. And the Church would be multiplied beyond the stars of heaven.

Dear fellow-traveller to Zion! it is indeed a goodly and blessed land towards which we are beckoned. Like the Delectable Mountains shown to the pilgrims, it is "a most pleasant, mountainous country, beautiful with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, very delectable to behold." There the sun shineth night and day. There "the beloved of the Lord dwell in safety by Him." And it is the *promised* land; our inheritance as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; our covenant right; "common to and *for all the pilgrims*." So we rejoice to believe with the immortal dreamer. But unlike him, we do not regard it as a far off land, never reached till the close of our earthly sojourn, and lying on the verge of the river of death. It is nigh unto us. *Why therefore should we rest another day without entering this Canaan of perfect love?* "LET US GO UP AT ONCE, AND POSSESS IT; FOR WE ARE WELL ABLE TO OVERCOME IT."

CHAPTER II.

The Minister's Need of Perfect Love.

"WHEREFORE I dare not, I, put forth my hand
To hold the ark; although it seems to shake,
Through the old sins and new doctrines of our land.
Only,—since God doth often vessels make,
Of lowly matter, for high uses meet,—
I throw me at His feet."

Geo. Herbert.

"THE growth of heart-felt religion is the spring of all ministerial peace and usefulness. We are what our hearts are."—*Bp. Daniel Wilson.*

THE following paragraphs are penned with much diffidence, and not without a humbling sense how far below his own ideal the forty years' ministry of the writer has fallen. Yet he believes and therefore speaks; with how intense longing that his honoured and beloved brethren may obtain full redemption!

To begin with the lowest consideration: Would not the toils, burdens, and trials of the sacred office be greatly alleviated by the experience of perfect love? That which cometh upon us daily, the care of the Churches, can be but inadequately estimated by outsiders. But it is real, heavy, and often exhausting. What if our duties were undertaken with the "glad heart and free" which is implied in entire consecration, and unfaltering reliance on God's all-sufficient grace?

Some things that devolve upon ministers in the present day are not (to say the least) very favourable to the retention and increase of true spirituality. Finance, schedules, building-schemes, and what not; mutual improvement societies; organisations for temperance, education, philanthropy, and religion: these all must be attended to and guided. How can we preserve the sacred flame from being thus smothered and extinguished, unless it glow with unusual ardour? Nay, more. The very frequency of special religious engage-

ments will imperil our own spiritual life, if this be clogged and chilled by remaining inward corruption. Without the supreme devotion to Christ of perfect love, our public exercises of prayer and praise may become merely mechanical; meeting classes a cold, dry, perfunctory form; and preaching itself a retailing of unfelt, oft repeated, and stale truths, a miserable crying of one's wares.

Public work is far from being the whole of our duty. Of what incalculable importance it is to *deal with individuals* as to their salvation! And in this we must be "instant in season, out of season." *Can we*, if the springs of our own religion be low; and our love be cloyed with earthliness, unbelief, and pride; and our consecration to the high and holy calling be but half hearted; and our motives marred by men-pleasing and self-seeking?

We are to be "ensamples to the flock"; not surely in what appertains chiefly to outward conduct, but also, and especially, as to the soul's interior life and the experience of full salvation. Nothing less than the enjoyment of perfect love can enable us, each one to become in the deep sense of the apostle's words, "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. iv. 12). Happy the Churches whose pastors can say, "O house of Jacob, *come ye*, and let us walk in the light of the LORD"! That which we, through God's infinite and condescending grace, have attained unto and daily enjoy, "declare we unto you, that ye also may have *fellowship with us*." But alas for the

people who are exhorted to "seize the crown of perfect love, and scale the mount of heaven," only by those who in their apathy and unbelief linger in the wilderness below!

Let us think of the power which streams forth from "a holy man of God," even when no direct effort is put forth for the good of others. How great, how blessed his unconscious influence! It is exerted as noiselessly, but as surely, as the shadow follows the sun, as the flower sheds fragrance, as the dew refreshes and fertilises. *Our character* tells on others, impresses and affects them: oh if it were only bright with Christ's image and fully transformed! Said one who went to hear the saintly McCheyne, "Before he opened his lips, as he came along the passage, there was something about him that sorely affected me." Beloved brethren, let our lives plead for Christ by their beauty, nobleness, purity. Let us attract others to His side by the magnetism of a heart pulsating only and ever with holy love.

And our sermons: What will make them effectual to break hard hearts, and heal broken ones; to make sin loathed, and holiness coveted and sought; to save men? Not voice, nor delivery, nor gesture; not graphic description, nor brilliant rhetoric, nor impassioned eloquence, nor cogent reasoning. No. These have their use; but it is *only the unction of the Holy One* that can enable us to reach the stratum of the soul where the religious consciousness is found, or to stir the depths of the spiritual nature. And that is given to men who are themselves saved; it is

abundantly shed only on hearts cleansed from all sin.

Mr. Wesley often declared that "where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached, there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God." But if the preacher himself be a stranger to this blessedness, he will be reticent on the subject; or he will speak about it with feeble and faltering accents, with little glow and earnestness and reality, without carrying conviction, or inciting the hearers to seek for full redemption. On the other hand, where the *creed* finds confirmation in the *experience*, can words describe the glorious results which would follow the testimony and the toil?

To be "prevailing agents" we must have the "emphatical spirit of prayer." Is not this in other words to say that we must have become Israelites indeed; men who in Jacob-like wrestling have obtained victory over all evil, deliverance from whatever is earthly, and the possession of supreme and perfect love? To take hold of God's strength, our arm should no longer be paralysed or enfeebled by remaining sin. To stand as priests within the veil, and prevalently intercede, our "filthy garments" must be taken from us. "The first, the highest, the most indispensable qualification for a Christian preacher," said the late Dean McNeile, "is his own habitual communion with God. In order to be real, it must be entire and without reserve. If there were any attempt at reserve, any fostering evil, it were vain to ask God's help."

O men of God! charged with tremendous responsibilities, wielding a mighty influence, and fulfilling functions which an angel might envy, suffer one around whom the shadows of the night when no man can work are gathering, with tender affection, yet with unutterable urgency, to say: Seek, strive, believe, that you may be wholly sanctified to God. Then will your lives be a power among sinful, dying men. Then will your preaching be instinct with rousing, hallowing, and all but resistless influence. As we stood on the threshold of our sacred life-work, some of us answered in the affirmative these questions: "Do you expect to be perfected in love in this life? Do you really desire and earnestly seek it?" If we have not yet attained this blessedness, ours be the immediate, earnest, unfailing resolve that we will never, never rest till we are wholly the Lord's.

CHAPTER III.

Sanctification; Entire Sanctification; Christian Maturity.

"If by perfection is meant such a deep, abiding sense of the iniquity of our own hearts as shall lead us to an increasing, and always availing dependence on the grace of God; if it is the perpetual bringing of our emptiness to the fulness which is in Christ: then I will say that this is the standard of action which the Scriptures uphold in our view."—*Dr. Chalmers.*

I. THE SALVATION which is through Christ Jesus is pre-eminently and throughout A DELIVERANCE FROM SIN; not only from its guilt, but from its power. Condemnation is removed. The sentence recorded against him who now, with contrite faith, trusts in Jesus, is blotted out. The sword of outraged justice is returned to its scabbard. The cloud of deserved wrath is dispersed by the bright beams of God's love. And the song rises: "O LORD, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me" (Isa. xii. 1).

But if this were all, it would be at the best but a partial and imperfect salvation. Pardon for the past must be attended with such a renewal of nature as will be a preservative against contracting fresh guilt. Hence the now accepted penitent is not left at the mercy of depraved propensities. His heart is changed. The dominion of sin is broken. A new, a heavenly life is breathed into him. Put among the children, there springs up in his soul the filial love to God which is the incentive to obedience, and the germ of holiness. The Hand that lifts off the crushing burden of guilt from the conscience also "breaks the power of cancelled sin." The Voice which proclaims forgiveness for the past bids the humbled, happy man "go and sin no more."

II. These blessings—designated in theological phraseology, JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION—ARE EVER CO-EXISTENT AND INSEPARABLE. If, in accurate analysis, we deem one to follow the other, it is, in point of fact, as invariably as night follows day. No man receives the new name of a child of God, without at the same time receiving the new nature, and becoming then and there in a measure partaker of the holiness of his Father in heaven.

It is of the last importance that this truth be distinctly apprehended and firmly held. *Every believer in Christ as his Saviour is holy.* He is not necessarily entirely and perfectly holy. Yet whatever is of the essence of holiness is his who accepts the Lord Jesus as his Saviour. The constituent elements of this grace are found in all the children of God. As this is not unfrequently overlooked, and much confusion of thought is therefore produced, let us patiently ponder some of the "true sayings of God."

"If any man," says the Apostle Paul, "be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17). And what is meant by the last phrase is explicitly declared in another of his epistles: "The new man . . . after God is created in *righteousness and true holiness*" (Eph. iv. 24). Accordingly this very epistle is inscribed "to the *saints* which are at Ephesus, and to the *faithful* in Christ Jesus;" on which Dean Alford truly remarks that "the omission of the article before πιστοῖς shows that the *same* persons are designated by *both* adjectives." They who truly believe in

Christ Jesus are manifestly regarded as holy persons. Further on in the same chapter (*vv.* 13, 14), they are spoken of as "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." Can this be less than their having received the stamp Divine? Have they not been renewed in the spirit of their mind after the image of God? All its lineaments are not as yet deeply traced; it does not shine out in a lustre undimmed by remaining selfishness and sin. But is it not there, the Spirit's seal? So again in 1 Corinthians i. 30, the same Apostle says: "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;" and so are these blessings linked together, that the alternative rendering in the margin of the Revised Version is, "Or, *both righteousness and sanctification.*" He who is, on his acceptance of Jesus, accounted righteous before God, is also sanctified to Him. Hence he conquers sin, and lives conformably with the commandment, which is holy, just, and good. All who are adopted into God's family "abstain from every design and word and work to which the corruption of nature leads. Although they feel the root of bitterness in themselves, yet are they endued with power from on high to trample it continually under foot, so that it cannot spring up to trouble them." *

What is in many quarters styled the *higher*

* WESLEY: Sermon viii.

Christian life is nothing more than that which every true believer realises; for he has victory over the world and sin, enjoys inward peace, walks before God in newness of life, and, loving God, keeps His commandments. If a man does not reach this standard, and exhibit this ideal, he surely cannot be said to have "passed from death unto life." Contrition for sin, strenuous endeavours to practise all virtue, ardent aspirations after holiness, show him to be "not far from the kingdom of God;" but he is not as yet one of its free and happy subjects. Let those who have been enfranchised and made parts of this "holy nation" humbly exult. Let them rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and stand fast therein. There need be no condemnation; no haunting dread; no shameful failures; no enervating half-heartedness. There ought to be much thankfulness; for the state of a justified man, involving as it does the enjoyment of the "lovingkindness" which is "better than life," power to live for God, and the hope of heaven, is (as Mr. Wesley says) "inexpressibly great and glorious."

III. While, however, it is thus explicitly avowed that EVERY BELIEVER IS REALLY HOLY, it is none the less certain that EVERY ONE IS NOT PERFECTLY HOLY. The disciples whom Jesus, who "knew what was in man," pronounced "*clean* through the word" which He had spoken unto them, did yet on that same evening show that they were not fully clothed with humility, by the

strife among them which should be accounted the greatest. And the members of the Corinthian Church, who were addressed as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," were still admonished as manifesting what was contrary to the mind of Christ. "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1 Cor. iii. 3.) Is there any true child of God that has not again and again bewailed the existence of remaining evil in his spirit, and owned that the beauty of holiness is blurred and bedimmed by what still lurks within?

Sin is *subdued* and conquered, but not *destroyed*, in every one who is born again. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John iii. 9); a passage which Mr. Wesley thus expounds: "By sin, I here understand outward sin, according to the plain, common acceptation of the word; an actual, voluntary transgression of the law, of any commandment of God, acknowledged to be such at the time that it is transgressed. But whosoever is born of God, while he abideth in faith and love, and in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving, not only doth not, but cannot, thus commit sin. So long as he thus believeth in God through Christ, and loves Him, and is pouring out his heart before Him, he cannot voluntarily transgress any command of God, either by speaking or acting what he knows God hath forbidden: So long that seed remaineth in him, that loving, praying, thankful

faith compels him to refrain from whatsoever he knows to be an abomination in the sight of God."

But while there is, in this sense, freedom from sin, it yet lingers in our nature. Those who have been made "sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty" are not yet cleansed from "*all* filthiness of the flesh and spirit;" some still remains. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would;" or, as more accurately rendered in Mr. Wesley's and the Revised Versions, "that ye may not do the things that ye would" (Gal. v. 17)—that, "being thus strengthened by the Spirit, ye may not fulfil the desire of the flesh, as otherwise ye would" (Wesley *in loco*). The fortress of Mansoul has been won for its legitimate Lord; but within its garrison some traitors lurk—maimed and bleeding, yet not dead.

"The sum of all is this: there are in every person, even after he is justified, two contrary principles, nature and grace, termed by St. Paul the flesh and the Spirit. Hence, although even babes in Christ are *sanctified*, yet it is only in part. In a degree, according to the measure of their faith, they are spiritual, yet in a degree they are carnal. Accordingly, believers are continually exhorted to watch against the flesh, as well as the world and the devil. And to this agrees the constant experience of the children of God. While they feel this witness in themselves they feel a will not wholly resigned to the will of God. They

know they are in Him, and yet find a heart ready to depart from Him, a proneness to evil in many instances, and a backwardness to that which is good. The contrary doctrine . . . cuts off all watching against our evil nature, against the Delilah which we are told is gone, though she is still lying in our bosom. It tears away the shield of weak believers, deprives them of their faith, and so leaves them exposed to all the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil." *

IV. Not here, however, need the triumphs of Divine grace end. THERE IS A BETTER BLESSEDNESS; A HIGHER STATE OF GRACE; A FULLER SALVATION. Sin may be, not only subdued and successfully resisted, but destroyed. Then evil in the heart and life has not merely received the thrust which leaves it wounded and bleeding, it is slain. The bitter and baleful thing is, not only nipped in the bud, but even the root is removed. The inclination and tendency to sin are exterminated, so that now there is no war within the citadel of the heart, but the battle is turned to the gate. Corruption's fountain is dried up; the entail of sin is cut off; its last remains are scattered; and the soul has become "all praise, all meekness, and all love."

Let us take, by way of example, the *sin of Pride*. In an unregenerate man it revels and reigns, unchecked and uncontrolled. It will make a Herod greedily drink in the blasphemous adula-

* WESLEY: Sermon on "Sin in Believers."

tion of the multitude. He is willing to be lauded as a god, till at length he is smitten, and dies of loathsome and pitiable disease. Not thus is it with a child of God. He is conscious how insidiously this evil may creep in, how this subtle sin often mars what would otherwise be to God as incense and a sweet-smelling savour. And he bitterly bewails the existence of such a thing in the chambers of his soul. "Men admire me," said the gifted and godly Henry Martyn, "and I am pleased; but I abhor the pleasure." But what of him who is "cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit"? The pleasure so abhorred is not felt. On the contrary, the plaudits of others may give real pain. Once, when the veteran missionary, Robert Moffat, rose to advocate the cause so dear to his heart, the whole audience sprang, in reverence and admiration, to their feet. But he shaded his face with his hand, while yet one saw pass over it a quiver as of pain; and when the cheers had ceased, he said, in tones which were felt to be the outcome of a humble spirit: "No, no! This is too much. I am but a poor old African missionary."

So it was in the case of another illustrious missionary of the Cross. If the tribute paid to his genius and zeal did not send a thrill of pain through his soul, yet it abased him to the very dust. When Dr. Duff went to America in 1854, he was received as an angel of God. After a journey hindered by deep snowdrifts, he arrived late at night at the house of his host in Philadelphia. Between sixty and seventy ministers

were waiting to welcome him. How profoundly this affected him, and how, instead of engendering pride, it filled him with wondering humility, is apparent from these words, which he afterwards wrote: "What could it all mean? I was lost in wonder, adoring gratitude, and love. . . . Surely, I felt, this unparalleled reception must be a first smile of Jehovah. Who but He, by His Holy Spirit, could have breathed into such diversities as were present then such a unity of feeling and sentiment and good-will towards a total stranger—and that stranger not a noble, or statesman, or man of literature or science, or discoverer, or ex-governor like Kossuth, but merely a humble missionary to the heathen? . . . Could this be a realisation of the promise, 'Them that honour Me, I will honour'? I then trembled, lest this might be a proud thought instilled by Satan, and prayed that my sense of personal nothingness might be deepened and deepened, until it became too deep for Satan ever to fill it up again. And in the end, I seemed to feel as if in my inmost soul I never had a deeper or humbler sense of my own utter unworthiness or nothingness than after that astonishing reception."

Thus *in the case of one entirely sanctified, pride would have no place.* The man may be aware of possessing gifts that win admiration. He may even be conscious that he has made some spiritual attainments. It cannot indeed be otherwise. How is it possible for a man's heart to glow with love to God, and he know it not? Can there be the graces of the Spirit, and the man all the while

be unaware of this? "True humility consists not in disclaiming what we possess, or in denying what we are." David knew that he was comely in person, sweet in song, valiant in war, a rich and powerful monarch,—could not help but know it. Yet with unfeigned lowliness, he said: "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?" "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty" (2 Sam. vii. 18; Ps. cxxxi. 1). Paul could not help but know that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles, and "laboured more abundantly than they all." But in this there was no elation. The *praise* of all was laid at Jesus' feet. "*Yet not I*, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. xv. 10). Where the spirit is thoroughly hallowed, the feeling of responsibility, keenly realising that where much is given much will be required, swallows up all vanity and vaunting. All the glory is given to God. "Where is boasting then?" Nay, rather, the truly holy man will join in the declaration—"In all the works of love which I may be able to accomplish, I seem to myself but as the gardener, who presents to his Master an offering of flowers gathered from his own garden, which the Master graciously receives. And this is pure *grace*, for He might have refused my offering, and might also have deprived me of the office which has yielded me so much pleasure" (*Prof. Tholuck*).

To return. We mean by entire sanctification, not merely such a state of soul as that sin is conquered and subdued; not merely that in seasons

of special religious susceptibility, devotion to God, and fellowship with Him there should be no consciousness of aught contrary to His will; not merely that when temptation is presented and unhallowed desire thus stirred there may be an immediate repression of the desire by an act of the will, the power of the new life, and looking to Christ, so that the temptation is not yielded to, nor guilt contracted. All this is blessed; but something more than this may be enjoyed, even such a complete renewal of the heart as that sin has no longer place within, the very root of evil is removed and eradicated, and the flame, the spark, of earthly passion is extinguished. "Purity of heart is the removal of whatever God could not admit into His immediate presence and fellowship with Himself; in other words, the abolition of sin itself." *

V. It must, however, be observed that THIS DELIVERANCE from all sin, inward as well as outward, DOES NOT INVOLVE THE RIPENESS AND FULNESS OF ALL CHRISTIAN GRACES. Being purged from all iniquity is one thing; the maturity of holy love another. The one is spoken of by St. Paul as being cleansed "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit;" the other as "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1). The one will be done in us as soon as we honour God by simply and fully relying on His promises, and whenever we dare to believe in Jesus for full

* *London Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1882.

salvation; the other needs a longer process, and comes as the result of diligent and prayerful culture. The one may be, by the Divine Spirit's agency, *instantaneous*. Correctly speaking it *must* be; for though a man may "be dying to sin for some time, yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love." But the other is *gradual*, a work of time. For, as Mr. Wesley further observes, "the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity."

This distinction, clearly apprehended, would help many seekers for full redemption to see how *holiness comes through faith*, to venture to claim it *now*, and praying, pleading, trusting, to rejoice in the consciousness that this glorious salvation they "*have*, and spotless love and peace."

"Jesus, the first and last,
On Thee my soul is cast:
Thou didst Thy work begin
By blotting out my sin;
Thou wilt the root remove,
And perfect me in love.

Yet when the work is done,
The work is but begun:
Partaker of Thy grace,
I long to see Thy face;
The first I prove below,
The last I die to know."

It would also rid some of the difficulty of owning what God has wrought in them—a confession which would bring establishment and increased blessing, but from which they shrink because they are all too conscious how far they are from manifesting the maturity of the Christian character, from having come "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13).

A branch of "the True Vine" may be quite sound and without rottenness, free from mildew and blight, and fully cleaned from the parasites which would destroy its beauty and verdure. Not all at once, however, will it be laden with the ripe clusters of holiness and heavenliness. But will not this be more surely and quickly secured because "the Husbandman" has done that? The child may have a perfectly healthy constitution, free from the germs of disease and from tainted blood, while yet there must be subsequent physical and mental growth until full age is reached. And surely the growth will be more regular and constant, and the development of the members and faculties more symmetrical, by reason of there being no latent disease or congenital weakness. To embark wholly with Christ is the act of a moment. When we have done so, we may, day after day, make headway and progress, until under His safe pilotage and the Spirit's favouring breezes, we cast anchor on Canaan's blessed shore.

CHAPTER IV.

Personal Holiness.

A PAPER READ AT A CONVENTION IN EASTBROOK CHAPEL, BRADFORD.

"'Be ye holy.' This includes the renouncing of the lusts and pollutions of the world, both in heart and life; and adds to it the filling of their room, being cast out, with the beautifying graces of the Spirit of God, and the acting of those graces in their whole conversation, both in private and abroad, in conversing with themselves and conversing with others, whether good or bad, in a constant, even course, still like themselves, and like Him that hath called them."—*Abp. Leighton.*

"PERSONAL HOLINESS" is our theme. May I not assume that it is a congenial and appreciated one? Does it not strike a responsive chord in many of our hearts? Eyes that have been opened by the Spirit's touch, purged from earthly films, and anointed with heavenly eyesalve, love to gaze on "the beauty of holiness." Ears to which the Ephphatha of the great Healer has been spoken find the command "Be ye holy" to be a delight. The saints of the Most High "give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." They reverently own that it is in this that He transcends all others, and that the rays of His excellence all meet in this focus and centre: "Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness?" Cherubim and seraphim, in their rapt and adoring song, ascribe this perfection to Jehovah in a manner which implies that it is His peculiar glory: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!" they cry; "the whole earth is full of His glory." And though our voices are lower, and our tones faltering, yet when we most fully antedate the joys above "our subject is the same."

Holiness has its archetype in God. So far as any creature—man or angel—possesses it, it is but the reflection of that unspeakable and supernal beauty. He is its fountain, its home. And He is unapproachable in this perfection: "There

is none holy as the LORD." But we may share that purity. We—yes, even we, worms of earth —may be partakers of the Divine nature, imitators of God as dear children. When Israel came out of Egypt, again and again the command was given to them, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." And has not the Spirit spoken expressly to us in these last days: "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [conduct, course of life]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy"? (1 Pet. i. 15, 16.) Can privilege be greater? Can honour be higher? Thoughtfully and prayerfully let us contemplate this perfect Pattern.

I. *How is God holy?* HE IS FREE FROM SIN. "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with Thee" (Ps. v. 4). "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13). "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). The God-Man, who came to reveal the Father to the world, and from whose life on earth we may learn the attributes of the invisible God, was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26). Hence we shall be cleansed from all "filthiness of the flesh and spirit" when we become like Him. We shall be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke." In the inward parts there will be no untruthfulness nor insincerity; no pollution, nor reviling, nor clamour in speech; no dishonesty, nor over-reaching, nor

unfairness in traffic; no sinful waste of time or money, nor sanction of ungodliness, in the amusements of our leisure hours. In the home, outbursts of anger will be unheard; extravagant expenditure unknown; forbearance and consideration, to the exclusion of envy, jealousy, and selfishness, will be exercised: temperance and chastity will spread their pure wings around us. Ay, and in our private ways, in the shades pierced only by the all-seeing Eye, a good conscience will be maintained; unhallowed propensities will no longer make us go heavily; we shall live, think, feel, desire, "as becometh saints."

II. *How is God holy? He is, not merely free from sin, but* IT IS TO HIM THE ABOMINABLE THING WHICH HE DOTH HATE. And when we are thus holy we shall be filled with deepest displacence at it; we shall recoil from all contact with it, and contamination by it; we shall detest and loathe and abhor it. Its first approach to ourselves will make our souls arise in mighty wrath against it; and to witness it in others will send a pang and a shudder through our whole nature. It was said of Dr. Arnold:

> "In him was Jesus crucified again:
> For every sin which he could not prevent
> Stuck in him like a nail; his heart bled for it,
> As it had been a foul sin of his own."

So when Henry Martyn, in his disputations at Shiraz, heard reproach of the Saviour's name, he wrote, "I was cut to the soul by this blasphemy;" and as he who had perpetrated it asked what was

so offensive, the saintly man replied: "I could not endure existence if Jesus were not glorified; it would be hell to me if He were to be always thus dishonoured." To be a holy man is not to be necessarily passionless and phlegmatic, with feelings so dull and dormant that even hideous evil does not stir them. There may be quick sensibilities and intense emotion; and we shall, not only cleanse ourselves from sin, but deeply hate and utterly abhor it.

III. Still further; *how is God holy?* IN THE POSSESSION, EXERCISE, AND MANIFESTATION OF ALL MORAL EXCELLENCES. Holiness in Him is far from being a merely negative or neutral thing. It is rather the assemblage, and this in highest degree and infinite perfection, of whatsoever things are pure, venerable, lovely, and glorious. "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints" (Rev. xv. 3). And when we are holy as He is holy there will be, not merely freedom from earthliness and sin, with keen abhorrence of it, but also *the exhibition in our life of all virtues.* Our appeal to those among whom we live can be, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly," as well as how "unblameably we behaved ourselves among you." Not only shall we be "sincere and without offence," giving none occasion for reproach or stumbling, but, higher still, we shall be "filled with the fruits of righteousness." We shall be more than unexceptionable; our lives will "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." Meekness; gentleness; contentment;

integrity; disinterested benevolence; sweet, majestic humility; heavenliness; "if there be any virtue, if there be any praise:" all these we shall manifest. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous" (1 John iii. 7).

Let us pause for a moment, and engrave it on our hearts that real holiness involves *carefulness to "maintain good works."* No merely pleasurable excitement, no transient emotions, no highly wrought fervours, no boastful pretensions can avail aught unless all our life exemplify the nobleness and purity of the Christian.

Moreover, *all Christian graces must be seen in us.* There is a fellowship among them; one is not found without leading up sister graces. The chain is not complete if one link be struck out. "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," these all form the one undivided "*fruit* of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22, 23). The temples worthy God must be complete structures; there being added to faith, superimposed upon it, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity; faith is the foundation, love the beautiful copestone; "faith leads the band, love brings up the rear." For the perfect harmony all strains and notes must blend. That the sacrifice may be acceptable, it must, not only be without blemish, but no part must be lacking.

Light is the emblem of holiness. (1 John i. 5—7.) How suggestive of the truth on which we are dwelling! By the use of a prism you discover that that which is so pleasant to behold

is composed of rays of different colours, all so exquisitely and proportionately blended as to form the white light. But they must *all* be there. "God is light," and in Him all virtues, all excellences, are perfectly united. They form the one, ineffable, transcendent glory of His name. And if we are holy as He is, then there will be in our lives the practice of all duties, and in our character the assemblage of all graces, the sterner and the softer beautifully blended.

"Ignatius says of a certain bishop, His soul is fitted to the commandments as a lute to its strings. Beautiful emblem of a holy soul! As a harp embraces all its wires; hath them all; all of the right size; all in the right place; all in tune: so complete excellence encircles every virtue; holds each in its place—each in proportion; all in harmony." * Such a soul will ever make music for the King of kings; and all that is thought and desired, every word and every deed, will be full of love, and will swell in one

> "Joyful consentaneous sound,
> Sweetest symphony of praise."

He was surely a mistaken man who, professing to have obtained the blessing of entire sanctification, defended an outbreak of temper by saying, "I am perfect in love, but not perfect in patience." He was a wise and well instructed man, Richard Watson, who, noting that the apostle delineates the perfect image of a Christian

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* From an unpublished MS. of the late Rev. Samuel Coley.

in the words, "The fruit of the Spirit is love," &c. (Gal. v. 22, 23), took them as the standard by which he should try himself, and went every night through all these things, one by one, to ascertain if each and all were found in himself. He that lacketh any has not yet reached "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" but if these things be in us and abound, ours is true holiness.

Oh, rare, incomparable, attractive beauty of holiness! Oh, liberty most blessed, when, being made free from sin, we become the servants of God and have our fruit unto holiness! Oh, sweetness ravishing and ever satisfying, when our "meat is to do the will of Him that sent" us! Oh, rest calm and untroubled, when our spirits, no longer tossed with feverish and earthly desires, have found their all in God! Oh, indispensable meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, the "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord"! Are not your hearts longing, yearning, craving, panting for it? Do not your labouring souls aspire after it? Do you not eagerly covet it? *Will you not perseveringly follow it?* WILL YOU NOT BELIEVINGLY CLAIM IT? For "this is the will of God, even your sanctification." Jesus has died that you might be "holy and without blemish." The ever-blessed Spirit waits to purge away all evil, and to make you partakers of His own nature. Oh, "be not faithless, but believing." Rise into the confidence—

> "He wills that I should holy be;
> That holiness I long to feel,

That full Divine conformity
To all my Saviour's righteous will.

On Thee, O God, my soul is stayed,
And waits to prove Thine utmost will;
The promise, by Thy mercy made,
Thou canst, Thou wilt, in me fulfil.

Come, Saviour, come, and make me whole!
Entirely all my sins remove;
To perfect health restore my soul,
To perfect holiness and love."

CHAPTER V.

New Testament Words.

"If we encourage thoughtful meditation on the exact force of words, both as they are in themselves, and in their relation to other words, or in any way unveil to us their marvel and their mystery, this can nowhere else have a worth in the least approaching that which it acquires when the words with which we have to do are, to those who receive them aright, words of eternal life."—*Abp. Trench.*

A LIVING writer has shown what fascination surrounds the *Study of Words*, and how it may open up fields of thought, and add to our stores of information. In another valuable and suggestive work,* he has truly observed: "The words of the New Testament are eminently the στοιχεῖα [rudiments or elements] of Christian theology, and he who will not begin with a patient study of those shall never make any considerable, least of all any secure, advances in this." Thus also Martin Luther's apothegm: "Divinity is the grammar of the Holy Ghost."

Accordingly it may not be without advantage if we inquire into the special significance and force of some of the terms by which is presented to us the privilege of Christians to live victorious over all sin, and fully sanctified to God. Different aspects of this glorious truth will come into view; the many-sided character of this blessing be perceived, and its influence traced, alike in the silent processes of thought, in the stirring of emotion, in the regal prerogatives of the will, and in the activities of the life. We begin with the word—

ἉΓΝΟΌΣ,

which primarily means *clean* or *pure*, and is used in the New Testament metaphorically for the holiness which is in the sight of God of great

* *Synonyms of the New Testament.* By Archbishop Trench.

price. St. Paul accounts for what some might deem his folly, by telling the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 2) that the object of his intense and unsleeping solicitude was to present them "as a chaste (ἁγνήν) virgin," free from all defilement, "to Christ," the ever-blessed Head and Husband of the Church. It is one of the characteristics of those things which the same apostle exhorts his much-loved Philippians to follow. They are to think on "whatsoever things are pure" (ἁγνά: Phil. iv. 8). St. Peter (1 Pet. iii. 1, 2) would fain have the conduct of the wives distinguished by it, so that the silent, effective eloquence of their "chaste (ἁγνήν) conversation," their holy behaviour, may win unbelieving husbands to Christ. And the sublimest employment of the word is when the last of "the glorious company of the apostles" declares that wherever the hope of heaven springs up in the heart, there will be a strenuous endeavour after conformity with the highest type of holiness: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (ἁγνός: 1 John iii. 3). Does not this imply the purging away of every sinful blot, and being so transformed as to shine in Christ's image with a lustre unsullied by sin?

All this is included in the next word that shall come under our notice—

"ΑΓΙΟΣ.

But there is something more. The meaning rises. Another truth comes into view. The term is often found in the New Testament and is nearly

always translated "holy." Dr. E. Robinson says: "The primary idea is *pure, clean*, like ἁγνός; but it superadds the notion of respect and veneration, which the latter has not." There is freedom from pollution, and also such moral excellences as will ever command the admiration and reverence of all possessed of spiritual discernment and right instincts. The ἅγιοι are saints indeed; all enlightened from above will honour them; God and good angels delight in them. The term often also includes the idea of *consecration*, being set apart from common uses, and devoted to high, sacred, godly ones. It is thus used of Jerusalem, the holy city, and of its temple, whose most sacred apartment was "the holiest of all." So men are regarded as being separated from merely ordinary and earthly purposes, and consecrated to God. The sprinkled blood and the anointing oil are upon them, and they have become "a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices;" their converse, recreation, and business, as well as their directly religious and devotional acts, being hallowed services.

It is important to note that this attribute of holiness is affirmed equally of the body as of the soul. (See Romans xii. 1 and 1 Corinthians vii. 34.) That which is deemed by some to be so much the seat of sin, as to render it impossible that we should be perfectly holy until, by the resurrection, it is made a spiritual body, is even now and in this world called "holy." This is rightly judged by Dean Alford to be "an indication that the sanctification of the Christian life

is to extend to that part of man's nature which is most completely under the bondage of sin."

Is it not a further confirmation of the views advocated in these pages that the term is in some passages associated with others expressive of freedom from the opposite of holiness? The great purpose of God in choosing His people in Christ was that they "should be holy and *without blame before Him* in love" (Eph. i. 4). Christ gave Himself for the Church, "that it should be holy and *without blemish*" (Eph. v. 27). One word—ἄμωμος—is employed in both these passages, though differently rendered in the authorised version. There is the positive side of the Christian character, holiness; and also the negative, the non-existence of any exception to that holiness. And we are undoubtedly taught that in our inmost being, where thought is born and feeling gushes forth, we may be "without blame before Him," so that God's pure and piercing eye will see nothing of the soil or stain of sin. It has been urged that "the presentation here spoken of is clearly, in its full sense, that future one at the Lord's coming, so often treated under the image of a marriage, not any progress of sanctification here below." * But the process is to be carried on and completed while the members of the Church are here in this world, and not by purgatorial pains after death. Besides which, it is to be remembered that an equally strong and expressive word is unquestion-

* Dean Alford on Ephesians v. 27.

ably used of Christ's people during their earthly sojourn. One of them could truthfully say, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and *unblamably* we behaved ourselves" (1 Thess. ii. 10); and he faltered not in his prayer for the Church to whom he thus appeals, that being cleansed from all sin, sanctified wholly, they might be "*preserved blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." It was surely upon earth that they were made "blameless," and being preserved, they would at last be presented "faultless before the presence of His glory."

We come to consider a word which has often been the occasion of stumbling and controversy; but inasmuch as it was used by our Lord to describe the standard towards which we should aspire, and frequently occurs in the inspired Scriptures, we ought not to be afraid of uttering it. The term is—

ΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ.

"Be ye therefore perfect" (τέλειος), says Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, "even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The Apostle James regards such a thing as within the range of possibility (Jas. i. 4; iii. 2). The beloved disciple, dwelling on a theme most congenial to him, refers again and again to "love"—the essential element of the Christian life—being "made perfect." (See 1 John ii. 5; iv. 12, 17, 18.) And St. Paul, while owning that he is not, in one sense, perfected (Phil. iii. 12), *i.e.*, ready to receive the glorious crown for which he is striving, still does not hesitate to speak of himself and others

as being, in another and intelligible sense, "perfect" (Phil. iii. 15).

The radical idea of the word is the *having attained the end* for which a thing was framed, or a person created. So we use its English equivalent. Thus the "judicious Hooker": "We count those things perfect which want nothing requisite to the end whereto they were instituted." A watch is constructed to measure and indicate the progress of time. If it always does this accurately, it is a perfect watch. The materials of which it is made might be more costly, and the pattern more elegant; still it could not on these accounts be called an imperfect instrument, so long as it fully accomplished its purpose. Parental love is implanted that children may be cared for and trained; and the mother who spends herself, and employs all her powers and resources, be they less or more, to promote her children's welfare, perfectly loves them. Even so, love to God is shed abroad in our hearts in order that we may be powerfully attracted to Him, may cheerfully submit to His will, and always do the things that please Him. Now when these results are uniformly secured, the grace accomplishes its purpose, and, in words of truth and soberness, we may speak of it as being perfected. "Whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected" (1 John ii. 5). Much of imperfection, in another sense, may be found in the man. He is compassed about with infirmity. He has a physical frame that often dulls the ethereal sensibilities of the spirit,

and damps its ardour. His intellect is not always clear and sound; and hence he may be betrayed into mistakes and errors in judgment, and consequent errors in conduct. But so long as his love to God and man is in such vigorous play, and has such supremacy within, that he always keeps the commandments, and proves that they are "not grievous," that love is perfect. To deny this would be just as reasonable as to deny that the watch which always goes correctly is *perfect as an instrument*, because it does not show the time of the sun's rising and setting. It was never meant to do this. Nor was the love of God intended to make us angels. If it causes us to walk before Him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life, then "is our love made perfect."

St. Paul uses the word of Christians in this world as indicating full and completed growth. (See 1 Cor. ii. 6; xiv. 20, marg.; Phil. iii. 15; Heb. v. 14; xiii. 21.) They are no longer mere babes, but "fathers" in Christ. Theirs is a steady and vigorous piety. The graces of the new life have attained a certain ripeness and maturity. All this is a work of time, of sedulous cultivation of the heart, of patient study of God's Word, and of earnest attention to all the means of grace, whether enjoined or prudential. But, *to begin with*, we need to be made clean. Only a healthy body can grow to perfectly strong and well developed manhood. Only a sound mind can acquire just ideas and complete information. Now, whenever we dare to believe in Christ for the full healing and the cleansing virtue of His

blood, it shall be done according to our faith. The cry of our spirits must be—

> "Consume our lusts as rotten wood;
> Consume our stony hearts within!
> Consume the dust, the serpent's food,
> And dry up all the streams of sin.
>
> Its body totally destroy!
> Thyself The Lord, The God, approve!
> And fill our hearts with holy joy,
> And fervent zeal, and perfect love."

Then, ever growing up into our living Head, we shall "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13).

We have now to look at a similar word—

ΌΛΟΚΛΗΡΟΣ,

used by St. Paul in his sublime prayer for the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 23); a prayer which of itself should inspire us with the hope of being saved from all sin in this world, and enabled to yield ourselves fully unto God. The word is used by St. James (i. 4), and then immediately expounded; "perfect and entire (ὁλόκληροι), wanting nothing." The bodies of the Levitical priests were to be thus, with nothing deficient, nothing redundant; so were the sacrifices which they presented on the altar. And the Christian who is ὁλόκληρος, entire, has every grace of the Spirit; none is wanting. To be "sanctified wholly" (ὁλοτελεῖς) is to be delivered from whatever is contrary to pure love, and to be hallowed in every faculty, propensity, and power. "The

word signifies *wholly and perfectly;* every part and all that concerns you; all that is of or about you" (*Wesley*). The "spirit"—the highest, the immortal part, capable of religion, accountable to God, and distinguishing us from the brutes that perish; the "soul"—the seat of desires and passions which we have in common with the lower animals; and the "body"—all these being already sanctified, made entirely clean, and fully consecrated unto God, are then, by the ever-exerted power of the God of peace, "preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thrice welcome assurance that follows the prayer: "FAITHFUL IS HE THAT CALLETH YOU, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT."

ΚΑΘΑΡΟ΄Σ

is the equivalent of *clean* or *pure,* unsoiled or unalloyed. It is used in the Septuagint (Exod. xxv. 31—36) of gold that is free from alloy, unmixed with any baser metal; and also (Dan. vii. 9) of wool which has been thoroughly washed from its impurities. Hence, when it comes to be employed in a moral and spiritual sense, it denotes that which is undefiled, which no evil stains, and nothing earthly alloys. "*The pure in heart,*" pronounced by Jesus "blessed" (Matt. v. 8), are doubtless those who are cleansed from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and whose holiness is "unmixed with selfishness and pride," or other polluting and debasing element. Honey that is without wax we call pure honey; wine that is unadulterated, pure wine; gold that has

no alloy in it, pure gold. And the righteousness with which meaner principles do not mingle, and which encounters no antagonistic propensities within the breast where it has made its home, brings to a man the blessedness of those who "see God," and "behold the beauty of the LORD," not only when, with hushed and believing hearts, they "inquire in His temple," but also—

> "When round His wondrous works below
> Their searching, rapturous glance they throw;
> Tracing out wisdom, power, and love
> In earth or sky, in stream or grove;—
> Or by the light His words disclose
> Watch time's full river as it flows;
> Scanning His gracious providence,
> Where not too deep for mortal sense;—
> When with dear friends sweet talk they hold,
> And all the flowers of life unfold."

Happy men, thrice happy! In thought, desire, affection, and motive, in speech and action, there is not that which darkens or defiles; they have "clean hands and a pure heart," and as such they "receive the blessing from the Lord."

When our Divine Master said to Peter (John xiii. 8), "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," He meant in part—Unless My will be submitted to, there is an end of our union; only on condition of implicit deference and obedience, canst thou have part with Me. But what follows makes it apparent that another and deeper truth was folded up in Christ's words, even that without purification from sin, a purification which it was the great object of His life and death to

accomplish, there could not be part with Him. Without this, He could not complacently regard the heart, could not fill it with His own peace. Only by making men like Himself in holiness could He grant them fellowship with Him, and make them like Himself in happiness. Wesley has well brought out this signification: "If I do not wash thee in My blood, and purify thee by My Spirit, thou canst have no communion with Me, nor any share in the blessings of My kingdom." If Peter did not apprehend all this, he saw enough to make him most anxious to secure the full benefit of what was being done; hence, with characteristic eagerness, he exclaimed, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." In His reply, Christ uses two distinct words, which are, however, rendered alike in the Authorised Version. Mr. Wesley's is more accurate: "He who hath been bathed (λελουμένος) needeth only to wash (νίψασθαι) his feet." As if He had said—He who has just had, according to oriental custom, a complete ablution in the bath, does not, on arriving at the guest-chamber, need such another, but only to have his feet, that, having had nothing on but sandals, had been exposed to heat and dust and dirt, washed once again, and is then "clean every whit." And are we not taught that, if there have been true conversion, a complete change, a cleansing from sin in regeneration, there does not need another such thorough transformation? In seeking the blessing of entire sanctification, the Christian is not to overlook or undervalue all that has been already

effected in him by the grace of God. A justified person, though needing a further work of grace, is not in an unsafe state. He is in one incomparably blessed and glorious.* Having peace with God, he may rejoice in hope of His glory. There is now no condemnation to him. (See Rom. v. 1; viii. 1, 17, 31, 34.) If, by watching unto prayer, looking to himself, that he lose not the things which he hath wrought, and constantly exercising a penitent trust in the bleeding Lamb, he abides in Him, he shall "have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John ii. 28). Having bathed, he needs but to wash his feet. And if the one have been done, how much more the other! But the more he prizes union with his Lord, the more will he be intolerant of any defilement which, by inadvertence, or infirmity, or ignorance, he contracts in his journey through life; and the more will the prayer of his inmost soul ever be—

"Wash me, and make me thus Thine own;
Wash me, and mine Thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,
My hands, my head, my heart."

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* *Q.* 19.—Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

A.—Perhaps not. A believer, walking in the light, is inexpressibly great and happy.

Q. 20.—Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

A.—Undoubtedly we should beware of this; for one may insensibly slide into it.

Q. 21—How shall we effectually avoid it?

A.—When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state as strongly as possible.—*Minutes of Conference*, A.D. 1745.

There is a passage in which this word (*καθαρός*) in one of its forms occurs, and which has a thousand thousand times inspired confidence into the hearts that longed to be made perfect in love. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth (*καθαρίζει*) us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Blessed declaration of the surpassing, unfailing, everlasting virtue of that most precious blood! From all sin—inward, as well as outward—it purifies the believing man. It does it now, in this state of being. It does it whenever we dare to claim for ourselves this, its utmost efficacy. Some shrink from going thus far, and in their unbelieving fears empty the declaration of half its meaning by restricting it to the merit of Jesus' atonement in procuring pardon for all sin. But it has been well pointed out by Dean Alford that in verse 9, to cleanse (*καθαρίζει*) from all unrighteousness is plainly distinguished from to forgive us our sins; distinguished as a further process; as, in a word, sanctification distinct from justification. Still, therefore, do we cling to this glorious passage as holding out to us the prospect and promise of being delivered while on earth from all unrighteousness, purged from every sinful blot, and thus fitted for constant fellowship with Him who is light. Nor would we ever rest till, by sweet experience day by day, we know that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

As synonymous with the word that we have been considering Archbishop Trench mentions

Ε'ΙΛΙΚΡΙΝΗΣ.

This expressive term is used by St. Paul where he prays that "the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi" may be "*sincere*" (chap. i. 10). It is by some supposed to refer to "that which is cleansed by much rolling and shaking to and fro in the sieve;" by others, to that which is "held up to the sunlight, and in that proved and approved." Whatever its derivation, it denotes, when ethically employed, that which is unmingled, untainted, clear, free from double-mindedness, hypocrisies, and all evil. The "pure (*εἰλικρινῆ*) minds" of which St. Peter speaks (2 Pet. iii. 1) can only be attained when, the affections being fixed on God, and the will turned to Him alone, no fleshly or selfish regards obscure their perceptions or pervert their judgments. The eye is single, and the whole body is full of light. When the chaff, refuse, and dross are purged away and sifted out of the soul, and the bright and precious residuum is the genuine, the true, the pure, the good; when, under the searching light of truth, the spiritual nature is seen to be free from spot and blemish: then is the great design of the Redeemer accomplished in us. Such persons, through the power of God's grace, are "purified from pride, by the deepest poverty of spirit; from anger, from every unkind or turbulent passion, by meekness and gentleness; from every desire but to please and enjoy God, to know and love Him more and more, by that hunger and thirst after righteousness which now engrosses their whole soul; so that

now they love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and mind, and strength." *

Let us pause once more, and examine the word ΆΡΤΙΟΣ.

It is used in 2 Timothy iii. 17 of a religious teacher, who, being versed in holy Scripture, and imbued with its spirit, should be deficient in no essential qualification for his office. Its principal ideas are adaptation and endowment, and it is thus applied to a person or thing which is quite fitted and thoroughly furnished for its purpose. Though it occurs in the New Testament only in the instance above cited, yet derivatives from it are frequently found, and in some cases where the higher forms of Christian experience are denoted. See among others these texts: "I beseech you . . . that ye be *perfectly* joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. i. 10). "Finally, brethren, farewell. *Be perfect*" (2 Cor. xiii. 11). "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for *the perfecting* of the saints, for the work of the ministry" (Eph. iv. 11, 12), or rather, for the perfecting of saints to work of ministry or ministration. Christ's people, holy ones, are to be fully fitted and equipped—*perfected*—unto work of ministration, such service of God and the Church, in one department or another, as is most suitable

* Wesley: *Sermon* xxiii.

to the gifts and graces of each individual.* St. Paul's fervent intercession for the Church of the Thessalonians "rose like a fountain night and day," that he "might *perfect* that which is lacking in their faith" (1 Thess. iii. 10). So also in his sublime prayer recorded in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 20, 21), he asks that the God of peace may make them "*perfect* in every good work to do His will." And St. Peter in like manner pleads, "The God of all grace . . . make you *perfect*" (1 Pet. v. 10).

One form of the word is used by the evangelists Matthew and Mark, as they state that Jesus found the sons of Zebedee "*mending* their nets." Does not this suggest to us that in order that we may be duly and fully qualified for Christian work, all the rents which sin has made in our spiritual nature must be repaired? The perfecting referred to in the above precious passages must begin in our being altogether freed from the damage which evil has so sadly wrought within us. The powers of the soul must no longer be reduced in their tone, or hindered in their development, by remaining evil.

Then, the understanding being fraught with truth, and the heart with love, all the graces of the Spirit being present, and being freed from what would mar their beauty or counteract their blessed influence, and being in constant and blessed exercise, the believer is completely fur-

* See WESLEY: *Notes, in loco;* GREGORY: *Fernley Lecture*, pp. 67, 68; and Revised Version.

nished for all the activities and ministrations of the Divine life, "made perfect in every good work to do His will." It has been justly said that "the views given to us in this passage (Heb. xiii. 20, 21) of a matured state of holiness are remarkably full and comprehensive. The *practical development* of pure and benignant affections is first adverted to. We are to be made perfect in every *good work*. Christianity knows nothing of a holiness that does not manifest itself in outward obedience to God, and in active service to man. The *completeness*, too, of our obedience, is made prominent. We are to be ready to *every* good work, shunning no opportunity of doing good to others, and evincing the depth of our piety by our solicitude to keep every commandment of God, and to present our whole life as a sacrifice to Him." *

To be thus "perfect"—ἄρτιος—presents to us a grand ideal. And if, as we contemplate it, we feel as though we had not, even when cleansed from all sin, fully realised and embodied it; if the horizon, as we press toward it, seems still to recede; if the standard, as we eagerly and hopefully struggle upwards, appears to be always above and beyond us: still we will not give up our confidence that "the God of all grace"—of every kind of grace, and in superabounding fulness, who is also "able to make all grace abound towards" us—can and will thus make us perfect, and then "stablish, strengthen, settle" us. "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

* Rev. Dr. Williams on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

CHAPTER VI.

Why should it be Thought a Thing Incredible?

"I HOLD it for a most infallible rule in expositions of sacred Scripture, that where a literal construction will stand, the farthest from the letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art, which changeth the meaning of words, as alchymy doth or would do the substance of metals, making of anything what it listeth, and bringing in the end all truth to nothing."—*Richard Hooker.*

"THE holy Scripture is not a science of the understanding, but of the heart. It is intelligible only to those who have an honest and good heart. Charity is, not only the end of the holy Scriptures, but the entrance to them."—*Pascal.*

THAT it is the privilege of Christians to be cleansed from all sin has for some years past been more generally believed. Once, this conviction seemed to be peculiar to Methodists and a few others. Now, there are many among the different denominations who look on this as part of the heritage of all God's people. Yet the doctrine is not held universally. There are those who think it presumption, and what not. Nay; even good men have denounced these views, and almost held up their advocates to scorn as weaklings, fanatics, and enthusiasts. Reproach has also been brought on the doctrine because some who propounded it have degenerated into antinomian license. But apart from all this, there are not a few of the truly godly who cannot see that such a state of perfect holiness is attainable in this life. They have a profound conviction how weak is man in the conflict with evil; how mournfully prone he is to cleave to the dust, and to forsake God; and how the roots of sin are deep down in his heart, and ramifications of it intertwined with every fibre of his nature. And to be rid of all this seems impossible! Much in works of practical divinity, in Christian biography, and in the hymns of the Church fosters the idea that such a state of grace is "high," we "cannot attain unto it." And as such an idea will damp

all ardour, and paralyse all energy in the pursuit of holiness, it is worth while to pause, and prayerfully consider whether there is any foundation for this dispiriting view. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that we may in this life be made perfect in love?

I. "BECAUSE," say some, "IT WOULD RENDER HIM WHO HAD ATTAINED SUCH GRACE INDEPENDENT OF THE MEDIATION OF JESUS and the supplies of Divine grace." It would, if the branch can bear fruit when severed from the rooted stock; if the seed sown can germinate without sunshine and shower; if health, or even life, can be maintained without food and sleep. No one is really independent save God Himself. He only is of Himself, self-derived, and self-sufficient. Of all creatures, dependence is the law. The most exalted "live, move, and have" their being in God. He sustains the wing, and nerves the arm of the angels that "excel in strength." He kindles the blazing light of every "seraph-flame." He clothes with spotless purity "the saints in light." And indubitably, the saints on earth are saints no longer than they dwell in God. Their love was not self-originated; it can never, never be self-sustaining. We are most entirely, absolutely, always dependent on Him who first shed abroad this love, for the maintenance of it. "*Herein*," says the apostle of this doctrine, "is our love made perfect;" by our dwelling in God, and God in us. (1 John iv. 17.) From Him is our fruit found; never more so than when quite sound, ripe, and abundant.

The flame must be fed with fuel from above; the urn filled at the fountain-head. The most saintly will sing with Wesley:

> "Every moment, Lord, I want
> The merit of Thy death.
> Never shall I want it less,
> When Thou the gift hast given,
> Filled me with Thy righteousness,
> And sealed the heir of heaven;
> I shall hang upon my God,
> Till I Thy perfect glory see;
> Till the sprinkling of Thy blood
> Shall speak me up to Thee."

II. A more prevailing notion is that such a state is unattainable, on earth, as IT WOULD RENDER THE POSSESSOR OF IT IMPECCABLE; or, at least, temptation would have no power over him, sin no allurement. If the root of sin is removed, they say, how can it ever grow again? It is dwelling on the analogy that makes the objector err. Figures are often admirable for illustration, but they are not foundations (in all respects) on which argument may be built; capital windows, but poor pillars. It is next to impossible for us to conceive of spiritual processes and results except as aided by metaphors borrowed from material things. But metaphors must not be unduly pressed or strained; figures must not (to use the common phrase) be made to run on all fours. There is a point at which all analogies fail. So here. We speak of entire sanctification as the cutting off the entail of sin, drying up corruption's fountain, removing the root of sin, and so on. But we cannot argue from these expressions, used to

expound the teaching of God's Word, that sin may never more have place in a heart so cleansed. *It did find place in bosoms where previously there was no fountain of sin, no root of evil;* in immaculate angels; in our first parents when standing in the image of God. How much more may it in ours, encompassed with infirmity as we are!

Grant that it is somewhat difficult to understand how temptation can have any power over a heart from which the last remains of sin have been purged away. But a little deeper thought may convince us that such a thing is mournfully possible. Bishop Butler, in his incomparable work, has shown "how it comes to pass that creatures made upright fall." * But whether we can trace the process or not, we know that it is a terrible fact. And remembering this, the most advanced Christian will not be high-minded, but will fear. It is "the spirits of just men" that are so "made perfect" as that the shadow of evil will never again fall on them, their purity will never be sullied, their love never grow cold. For ourselves, whatever our attainments, warning words must always be needed.

> "The grey-haired saint may fail at last,
> The surest guide a wanderer prove:
> Death only binds us fast
> To the bright shore of love."

III. Some withhold their assent to the proposition that entire sanctification is attainable in this life until they can find LIVING AND CONSISTENT

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* See note at the end of this chapter.

WITNESSES to its enjoyment. But we demur *in toto cœlo* to the principle on which this is based. Not men's experience or attainments, but God's Word, is the rule of faith and practice. Shall our "unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 3, 4). Jonathan Edwards wisely said: "We must learn the way of bringing men to rules, and not rules to men, and so strain God's words until we make them wholly of none effect." While commands are given to us to be holy in all manner of living, and to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect; while promises are held out to us, the very terms of which imply that their fulfilment is to be realised in this world; while prayers for such an attainment have been penned under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost;—it can only be to the reproach and shame of professing Christians if none of them dare to claim this blessing as their own. Besides, it will generally be found that those who urge this objection to the doctrine do not very fairly judge such as venture to declare that they have entered this valley of blessing. They form their own idea of what an entirely sanctified Christian should be, no little of the angelic mingling therewith, and because they cannot meet with any who are the exact counterpart of that idea, the Scripture-teaching itself is impugned. No allowance is made for human infirmity, for mistakes of judgment, for information that is but partial or even erroneous, for faults of manner, for peculiar physical or mental

temperament. Hence it is not perceived that there may be superficial blemishes while yet the "heart is sound" in God's "statutes." We will not affirm that there might not be more "sweetness and light" with advantage, yet of how many may we say, "Behold an Israelite indeed"!

For, in truth, *a great cloud of witnesses could be produced*, declaring how they have found our great High Priest "able to save to the uttermost." There is living now a man on whom the snows of more than fourscore winters have fallen, and whose hoary head as found in the way of righteousness is indeed a crown of glory. He is a competent witness. A Cambridge graduate, sceptical about religious truth, after a long interview and discussion, said to him, "Dr. Mahan, you evidently have a clear understanding of all the systems of philosophy that have ever been developed." This cultured, well-read, reasoning, and reflective man humbly yet confidently declares that for forty-six years he has had his spiritual dwelling-place in the midst of bright-shining revelations, and that his inner and outer Christian life and experience have been in conscious conformity with them. And all this came to him, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. For years before he had found grace to keep himself pure, so far that his character or reputation had not been in the least tarnished by a single immoral word or act, and that he had been ever careful to avoid all forms of action and indulgence which might be regarded as of a doubtful character. But after eighteen years

thus passed, there arose within him a desire for fuller light, deeper sanctity, and more perfect victory, which became almost insupportably intense. Then the eyes of his understanding were enlightened, the grey cloud above and around him disappeared, and he stood face to face with the Sun of righteousness, feeling His Divine healings through every department of his being. Since then, for nearly half a century has he walked in the light, as God is in the light, and proved that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.* Moreover, he declares that he has met with multitudes who have received "like precious faith," and have fellowship with him in this glorious light and liberty.

What shall we say to these things? For the testimony thus borne is in harmony with the teachings of God's own Word. Ought not our joyful conclusion to be, Such honour may be the heritage of all the saints?

IV. In some minds, the especial difficulty is found in the assertion that this state of grace may be INSTANTANEOUSLY ATTAINED. They plead for a gradual subduing of sin, until it is at last destroyed. They cannot receive the saying that at once all evil may be cast out, and the thoughts, desires, affections, and will brought into harmony with God's will.

1. Have such persons pondered *the distinction*, pointed out in previous pages, *between cleansing*

* *Vide Autobiography* by the Rev. Asa Mahan, D.D., LL.D.

and growth, sanctification and Christian maturity? As the former is especially God's work, He surely can accomplish it at once, and without a long and laborious process. Entire holiness, the cleansing away of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, is not the development of the grace received in regeneration; it is altogether of the operation of God; and He can and will, upon our rightly honouring Him by faith, cut short the work in righteousness and make an end of sin. This certainly is not "too hard for Him."

2. *We appeal again to facts.* There is not to be met with any one who, having sought this perfect deliverance from inbred sin only by trying to grow in grace, is now conscious of having realised it. This may seem to be a rather sweeping assertion; but let religious literature be ransacked, the biographies of the most eminent Christians appealed to, devotional books consulted, and the strain in all will be found to be lamentation over the existence of tendencies to evil, proneness to depart from the living God, and what sometimes amounts to defeat in the spiritual warfare. And some, when pointedly challenged in conversation on the subject, have owned that after all their long, painful, and earnest endeavours to obtain purity of heart, they know not its blessedness, nor dare adopt as their own the language of St. John: "Herein is our love made perfect."

3. On the other hand, there is *a goodly company of thoughtful and well instructed Christians* who can testify that in the hour when they made

an entire surrender of themselves, and trusted Jesus for full salvation, in that self-same hour the last fetter of sin was knocked off from the soul, and they rejoiced in the perfect liberty of the sons of God. It was upon finding such everywhere in his societies, that Mr. Wesley was first led to inquire into the truth on this matter, and to search "the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so," until he came to the deliberate conviction that such a salvation might at once be wrought in any believing heart. Since his day, how many have blessedly entered into the same experience! May we refer here to the explicit statement of Dr. Mahan? "Sanctification," he says, "like pardon, I have found in experience to be an *instantaneous* work. Propensities which, from childhood up, and not less during the first years of my Christian life than during my impenitency, had had absolute control when strongly excited, in a moment lost utterly and for ever their power, being superseded by a new and right spirit of an opposite character. If I am conscious of anything, I am conscious of being, by the cross of Christ, crucified to the world, and the world to me. Nor was this crucifixion a long and painful process. When a penitent, self-renouncing, fully consecrated, and trustful soul has put itself into the hands of Christ for pardon, or for cleansing, a short work will the Lord make; and an equally short one in each case."

Not less clear and conclusive is the testimony of Dr. T. C. Upham, Professor of Mental and

Moral Philosophy. After describing his religious state during the twenty years and more in which he had been a member of a Christian Church, how his attention had been turned to the Scripture doctrine of holiness, and how he had striven to attain it, he thus proceeds: "On Sabbath evening, the 2nd of February [1840] I was greatly afflicted in mind; tossed to and fro as in a tempest; and it seemed to me that I could not easily stand where I was, but must either advance or retreat. But God's grace was sufficient! My faith remained unshaken; and, on Monday morning, I thought I could say with great calmness and assurance, Thou hast given me the victory. I was never able before that time to say with sincerity and confidence, that I loved my heavenly Father with all my soul and with all my strength. But, aided by Divine grace, I have been enabled to use that language, which involves, as I understand it, the true idea of Christian perfection or holiness, both then and ever since. There was no intellectual excitement, no very marked joy, when I reached this great rock of practical salvation. The soul seemed to have gathered strength from the storm which it had passed through on the previous night; and aided by power from on high, it leaped forward, as it were by a bound, to the great and decisive mark. I was distinctly conscious when I reached it. The *selfish exercises* which had recently, and as it were, by a concentrated and spasmodic effort troubled me so much, *seemed to be at once removed;* and I believed, and had reason to believe, that

my heart, presumptuous as it may appear to some to say it, was now purified by the Holy Spirit, and made right with God. I was then, if I was not mistaken in my feelings, no longer an offering to the world, but SANCTIFIED UNTO THE LORD; given to Him to be His, and no longer my own; redeemed by a mighty power, and filled with the blessing of perfect love."

Let yet another testimony be candidly considered. It is that of a medical man—Dr. Birchenall, of Macclesfield—"who, so far from being an ignorant enthusiast, was equally well-versed in mental philosophy and natural science." Here is his record: "I was now athirst for holiness of heart. To be fully sanctified to God, to be a vessel unto honour, to be a witness for Jesus, and to minister unto the saints, comprehended the whole of my desires. I sought, by much prayer, and great singleness of eye, to have these great objects secured. In doing this, I found that the exercises of my faith must have a distinctness unto Christ as my 'Sanctification,' even as they had previously had when He was apprehended as my 'Righteousness.' I found myself sensibly growing in grace, and acquiring, by the general outpouring of the Spirit, great freedom in prayer, and a holy confidence in intercession for others; but there were roots of bitterness occasionally springing up to trouble and defile. I had no rest in my spirit as long as I found within the remains of the carnal mind. I pleaded for its destruction; I saw this to be involved in the gracious provisions of the 'better covenant'; and I looked to the

'Faithful and True Witness' that I might share the blessedness of the pure in heart. I did not look in vain. The Lord fulfilled the word in which He had caused His servant to trust; He cleansed from all unrighteousness; He gave me a new heart, 'all praise, all meekness, and all love'; and on its fleshly tablet He wrote His pure and perfect law. From this time Jesus was ever present to my mind, as the Source of spiritual life, as the High Priest of my profession, and as my Great Exemplar. I received of His fulness; I drew nigh to God in His name, with deepest reverence, but with extraordinary confidence and power; I endeavoured to walk as He walked; and I laboured unweariedly from day to day for the promotion of His glory. His great and glorious name was so hallowed in me that it could not be mentioned by any one reverently but my lip would quiver with emotion, and the tear would glisten in my eye. I strove to keep the issues of my heart by constant self-communing and self-renunciation, 'holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.'"

What are we to make of these testimonies? They are given by men of education and thought, accustomed to mental analysis and philosophical investigations. They are the opposite of ambiguous or faltering. They have been consistently maintained. A competent judge—the Rev. Dr. Rigg—who knew him long and well, says of the last quoted: "John Fletcher was not, I believe, a holier man than John Birchenall." Professor Upham told a friend of the writer that he had,

amid many difficulties, been enabled for years to walk in this light and liberty and love. Dr. Mahan's declarations, recently published, speak of it as an experience *begun at a definite moment*, and remaining for forty-six years. Hundreds, nay thousands, of men and women in every condition of life have in like manner testified to their being at once made every whit whole. Again we ask, What are we to make of these facts? To refuse to consider them, or to reject the one conclusion to which they bring us, were not scientific, not even rational. Better far, infinitely better, that we too should look up to an almighty Saviour, and dare to say—

> "My heart, which now to Thee I raise,
> I know Thou canst *this moment* cleanse,
> The deepest stains of sin efface,
> And drive the evil spirit hence.
>
> Be it according to Thy word,
> Accomplish now Thy work in me;
> And let my soul, to health restored,
> Devote its little all to Thee."

V. "But is not the CHRISTIAN LIFE A CONFLICT? And how can it be, when the heart is entirely cleansed from evil?" Are there then no spiritual enemies but those which exist within? Read we not of "principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places," against whom we have strenuously and to the end to fight? When every power within the citadel of the heart has become entirely loyal to the Lord Jesus, there is a battle which is turned to the gate.

VI. "Still: while we are IN THE BODY, how can we expect to be FREE FROM SIN?" Because bodily appetites, if sometimes *the occasion* of sin, are *never its cause.* This is found in the carnal mind which is enmity against God. The seat of sin is not in the body, but in the will. If Adam, when unfallen, had a body; if "the second Adam," so perfectly holy, was "made flesh"; there can be nothing in this which necessarily involves the taint of pollution and guilt. One thought that the contention that matter is intrinsically evil, was an exploded error. The teaching of the New Testament indubitably is that the members of the body may become "instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. vi. 13); that our "bodies" may be presented "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. xii. 1).

VII. "But there are many DECLARATIONS IN THE BIBLE ITSELF which conclusively prove that the idea of perfect holiness is, at the best, but a beautiful dream."

Let us candidly examine those which seem to have this aspect.

"There is no man that sinneth not" (1 Kings viii. 46). "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. xx. 9.) "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccles. vii. 20). We might urge that *it is anything but right to estimate the standard of Christian privilege and attainment by declarations made under an inferior dispensation.* These surely should not limit and

condition the express and solemn statements respecting the efficacy of Jesus' blood and the glorious fulness of the Spirit's grace. What are the above and similar texts but assertions of the deep and universal depravity of our nature? This truth is perfectly consonant with the other truth that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

"I have seen an end of all perfection: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad" (Ps. cxix. 96). Even if it were quite clear that the "perfection" spoken of is that of the moral character, this declaration of the psalmist that observation and experience had failed to find any one thus upright and pure, ought not to be allowed to empty of its meaning the command of David's Son and Lord, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." But in point of fact there is no reference to such perfection. The meaning has been well given by the learned Dean Perowne, in the note on the verse in his admirable Commentary on the Psalms. "If this rendering is correct," he says, "the meaning is obvious. There is nothing upon earth to which there does not cleave some defect. But perhaps the clause should rather be rendered: I have seen an end, a limit, to the whole range (or compass) of things; a meaning which may be defended by the use of the similar word in Job xxvi. 10, xxviii. 3, and which harmonizes with the next clause: Thy commandment is exceeding broad, has no limits, whilst all other things are bounded by a narrow compass."

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John i. 8). One thing is beyond all question. No man of ordinary sense would contradict himself. He would not utter one thing, and then, in the same breath, affirm the diametrically opposite. Least of all would the Spirit of truth, by whose inspiration the apostle wrote, first assert, and then immediately deny a proposition. Now he had just declared that he and those who had fellowship with him might "walk in the light, as God is in the light," and that this wondrous blessedness was theirs because "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Could he, while the ink was still flowing from his pen, assert that it does nothing of the kind? Must not the words that follow have some sense which fully harmonizes with the preceding words? Must not this be the only sense the words will bear? It is given in Mr. Wesley's terse note on the passage: "*If we say*—Any child of man, before His blood has cleansed us. *We have no sin*—To be cleansed from, instead of confessing our sins, *v.* 9, *the truth is not in us*—Neither in our mouth, nor in our heart." *

There is surely nothing in these passages, fairly interpreted, to make us falter in our confidence that "THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD, EVEN OUR SANCTIFICATION."

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* On the petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer, see chap. viii.; and on St. Paul's apparent disclaimer (Phil. iii. 12) see Answers to Queries at the end of the volume.

NOTE TO PAGE 76.

"From these things we may observe, and it will further show this our natural and original need of being improved by discipline, how it comes to pass, that creatures made upright, fall; and that those who preserve their uprightness, by so doing raise themselves to a more secure state of virtue. To say that the former is accounted for by the nature of liberty, is to say no more than that an event actually happening is accounted for by a mere possibility of its happening. But it seems distinctly conceivable from the very nature of particular affections or propensions. For, suppose creatures intended for such a particular state of life, for which such propensions were necessary; suppose them endued with such propensions, together with moral understanding, as well including a practical sense of virtue as a spiritual perception of it; and that all these several principles, both natural and moral, forming an inward constitution of mind, were in the most exact proportion possible, *i.e.*, in a proportion the most exactly adapted to their intended state of life; such creatures would be made upright, or finitely perfect. Now, particular propensions, from their very nature, must be felt, the objects of them being present, though they cannot be gratified at all, or not with the allowance of the moral principle. But if they can be gratified without its allowance, or by contradicting it, then they must be conceived to have some tendency, in how low a degree soever, yet some tendency, to induce persons to such forbidden gratification. This tendency, in some one particular propension, may be increased by the greater frequency of occasions naturally exciting it, than of occasions exciting others. The least voluntary indulgence in forbidden circumstances, though but in thought, will increase this wrong tendency, and may increase it further, till, peculiar conjunctures perhaps conspiring, it becomes effect; and danger of deviating from right, ends in actual deviation from it: a danger necessarily arising from the very nature of propension, and which, therefore, could not have been prevented, though it might have been escaped, or got innocently through. The case would be, as if we were to suppose a straight path marked out for a person, in which such a degree of attention would keep him steady; but if he would not attend in this

degree, any one of a thousand objects catching his eye might lead him out of it. Now it is impossible to say, how much even the first full overt act of irregularity might disorder the inward constitution, unsettle the adjustments, and alter the proportions which formed it, and in which the uprightness of its make consisted. But repetition of irregularities would produce habits. And thus the constitution would be spoiled, and creatures, made upright, become corrupt and depraved in their settled character, proportionably to their repeated irregularities in occasional acts."—BUTLER: *Analogy of Religion*, Part I. ch. v.

CHAPTER VII.

Following Holiness.

"WHATEVER stands in the way of holiness is as a plague spot, as a cancer preying on the vitals of the spiritual life. Are we unwilling it should be burnt out? We must remember it is a question of life and death with us."—*A. N. Groves.*

"I WOULD have my heart purged from vanity, appetite, and earth, and derive from heaven a heavenly temper. I am still panting for a *supplemental conversion*. . . . Resolved, by the grace of God, I will still pursue it, day by day, till the blessing come."—*Dr. Andrew Reed.*

THE salvation possessed by those who are entirely sanctified is not distinct *in kind* from the enjoyment of God and His love possessed by every converted man, but only *in degree*. Hence it follows that everything which contributes to maintain and invigorate the life of God in the soul will so far contribute to the attainment of perfection in holiness. All the means of grace, both private and public; all the outgoings of the soul after God; all the exercises of holy living; all that gives spiritual energy, clearer perception of things Divine, intenser ardour, enlightenment and sensitiveness to the conscience, and higher aspirations to the heart, will conduce to the blessed consummation. And nothing can be more preposterous than for a man the tone of whose piety is low and languid, whose walk is careless and inconstant, to dream of attaining perfect holiness as by some convulsive effort. It is to be sought (for it can never otherwise be attained) in a steady and constant cultivation of the heart.

But we wish in this chapter to set forth some things which are peculiarly appropriate and needful to him who seeks this full salvation. Not by any means overlooking the ordinary means of maintaining the inner life, we would bring out

into marked prominence what will enable us to cleanse ourselves and perfect holiness.

I. We mention first a CLEARER SENSE OF GOD'S FORGIVING AND ADOPTING LOVE. With the spirit of those who are God's children by faith in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit bears witness. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). The contrite soul, that surrenders itself unto God, and accepts and relies on Jesus as the Mediator, is not left in torturing anxiety as to whether guilt is cancelled or not. The Comforter

> . . . visits the sorrowful breast
> The burden of guilt to remove,
> And bring us assurance and rest.

For our present purpose, it is to be especially noted that this blessed persuasion that God is reconciled to us, varies in clearness and strength. In some hearts, it is mingled with misgivings and fears; while in others, it rises into unwavering and blessed confidence. In the one case, the day is "neither clear nor dark," the light struggles through the mists that remaining earthliness produces, and through clouds of temptation; in the other, it shines with clear and steady ray.

Now *the more fully we realise God's fatherly and reconciled love to us, the more ardently do we in return love Him.* In the first moments of spiritual life, when the inward, opened ear caught the gracious words, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for My name's sake," we sprang forth in reverent gratitude and childlike

love to our God. As the kiss which sealed the pardon thrilled our whole frame, we gave ourselves up to the everlasting Arms. "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John iv. 19). And the more vividly we realise that He *so* loves us, the more our hearts are yielded up to Him. Never are our longings to love God supremely, perfectly, and for ever so fervent, as when we most sensibly, blessedly feel that He is pacified towards us. Let us then seek after this. Let us live more than ever by the faith of Him through whom we are reconciled to God. Let us apprehend more fully the merit of His death. Let us never be satisfied without the strong and permanent and clear witness that by that death we are admitted into the family of God. Be this our ceaseless cry—

> "Come then, my God, mark out Thine heir,
> Of heaven a larger earnest give!
> With clearer light Thy witness bear,
> More sensibly within me live."

Then, prizing most highly the mercy which has granted to us the joys of God's salvation, wondering that such love should be bestowed on us, we shall be more than ever prompted to exclaim—

> "I cannot rest in sins forgiven,
> Where is the earnest of my heaven?"

II. A SENSIBILITY OF SIN, deep and poignant, will help to make us restless until it is utterly exterminated.

"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matt. ix. 12). It was

not until we felt the enormity of our guilt and the power of inbred evil, that a Saviour was welcome to us. Nor shall we now "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," unless we loathe it, and abhor ourselves because of its existence to any degree within us. This great work of deliverance from the last remains of sin will never be wrought in us without the creation in our souls of an almost painful sense of our need of it.

Most of those who have at length attained this perfect holiness were brought to it by a process analogous to that by which they first received pardon and renewal. They were deeply humbled because of remaining depravity. It appeared to them in a light vivid, solemn, and searching. The burden was next to "intolerable." And sometimes it seemed as if their joy in God as their reconciled Father would be overborne by the poignant sense which they had of spiritual corruptions and tendencies to sin which were not destroyed. Victory over pride, anger, self-will, unbelief, covetousness, and inordinate affection, they had. But it was exquisite pain to feel that there yet remained any lurking disposition towards such unholy and hateful things. They did truly love God, and yet could not but exclaim—

> "'T is worse than death my God to love,
> And not my God alone."

Ought we not thus to bewail our own sinfulness? Shall we ever stir up ourselves to take hold upon God for this full salvation without

being (as some have phrased it) *convicted for holiness?* What reason is there for this shame and humiliation before God! How many abominations lurk and fester within the chambers of our souls! Let us take the lamp of God's Word and explore these. Let us seek to know every man the plague of his own heart, and to apprehend more fully the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Presenting our heart and reins to the all-searching and all-holy God, ours be the prayer—

> "Show me, as my soul can bear,
> The depth of inbred sin!
> All the unbelief declare,
> The pride that lurks within."

Then shall we not rest until all these stains are washed away, and this unutterably loathsome vileness removed.

III. A FIRM CONVICTION THAT THIS PURITY OF HEART IS ATTAINABLE IN THIS LIFE will do much towards our possessing it.

An exalted aim is an inspiration. Hence some writers on practical religion who contend that our sanctification can on earth be only partial, yet urge a pursuit of it so earnest and unflagging as if to be wholly sanctified were possible. They will say with Alleine, "He that desires not to be perfectly holy is not sincerely holy;" and ask us steadily and unweariedly to follow it. But this is futile. Constituted as our minds are, there cannot be such a pursuit unless we are sustained by the conviction that we may succeed. No man can sedulously strive after what he believes to

be impossible. The very thought chills all ardour, unnerves the arm, paralyses energy. It is a hard, a hopeless task to seek for what we are persuaded can never be found,

But how are we stimulated and sustained if we have the conviction that this blessed state is attainable by us! When a man can take up the words—

> "The glorious crown of righteousness
> To me reached out I view;
> Conqueror through Christ, I soon shall seize
> And wear it as my due,"

the strain stirs him like a clarion, and he presses on to the triumph. "We are saved by hope." Confidence that we shall succeed is ever an augury of success. Ours then be the confidence that we may, even on earth, be made altogether the Lord's. Is not this the will of God, even our sanctification? Was not the Son of God "manifested, that He might," not only subdue, but even "destroy the works of the devil"? (1 John iii. 8.) Cannot His precious blood purge away our every stain? Is not the Holy Spirit given to impart to us His own blessed purity? Does not many a command enjoin us to be holy even as He which hath called us is holy? And will not God give that which He commandeth? Does not the covenant which is "ordered in all things and sure," speak on this wise: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you"? (Ezek. xxxvi. 25.) Are not the "exceeding great and precious promises" given that we "might be

partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" ? (2 Pet. i. 4.) Are not these "the true sayings of God" ? Then—

> "Rejoice in hope, rejoice with me,
> We shall from all our sins be free."

IV. WILLINGNESS TO BE MADE WHOLE is essentially necessary to our having a perfect cure.

There lies at the bottom of many of our hearts —so deep and subtle, as perhaps hitherto to have eluded our notice—a half dread of being sanctified wholly, a shrinking from it. We start back from the sacrifices which may be required. We are not prepared to give up our idols; to surrender our whole selves, and the control of everything in our lot and life, to the Lord; to go without the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ; to follow the Lord fully; and honestly to say,

> "No cross, no sufferings I decline,
> Only let all my heart be Thine."

We fear the confession we may have to make, and the consequent singularity; the care and circumspection, the tension of thought and effort, needful to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. We do not wish to part with a certain license and apathy into which our religion at times degenerates.

Many of these difficulties are, it is true, imaginary; or rather, we should, on facing them, find that they vanish like the thin mists of the morning as the sun goes forth in his might. The most onerous duties can be performed when

all-sufficient grace is vouchsafed. Any cross may be borne when we feel that Jesus (as Rutherford says) carries the heaviest end of it. Possessed and filled with His love, what is it that we cannot sacrifice and forego? His presence—sweet, sustaining, and comforting—may be so sensibly felt that sorrow itself is turned into joy. Frances Ridley Havergal, two months after she learned the secret of liberty and peace, had a great disappointment and loss; but she could write, "I have just had such a blessing in the shape of what would have been only two months ago a really bitter blow to me; and now it is an actual accession of joy. . . . I really had not expected that He would do for me so much above all I asked, as, not merely to help me to acquiesce in this, but positively not to feel it at all, and only to rejoice in it as a clear test of the reality of victorious faith which I do find brightening almost daily. . . . Now 'Thy will be done' is not a sigh, but only a *song*."

Still we must be willing to be the Lord's unreservedly and for ever; and to forsake or give up whatever would interfere with this. It may be in itself a comparatively trifling matter; but it becomes a *test*. It is the battle-ground between self and the Saviour. And He must utterly prevail, *all* being unblenchingly laid at His feet, or we shall not receive perfect liberty, perfect purity, perfect love. Let us quote again Miss Havergal's words. Talking with her sister, she said: "Yes; it was on Advent Sunday, 1873, I first saw clearly the blessedness of true con-

secration. I saw it as a flash of electric light, and what you *see* you can never *un*see. There must be full surrender before there can be full blessedness. God admits you by one to the other."

Is there this willingness in the follower of Jesus whose eye rests on this page? In order that you may obtain purity of heart, you must be firmly resolved to resist all temptation, to cast down every idol, to discharge every duty, to submit to any discipline, and to consecrate all your soul and body's powers, your time, talents, property, influence, all you have and are, unto the Lord. Can you say — There is nothing that would dishonour Christ that I will not forsake; nothing that would bring glory to Him which I will not render and perform; I will give up *myself*, and all I have, into His hands, for time and eternity; I will follow Jesus whithersoever He goes? Can you pray with Lady Maxwell, "Put a thorn in every enjoyment, a worm in every gourd, that would either prevent, or in any measure retard my progress in the Divine life"? If so, the day of liberty draws near. "One thing"—only one—"thou lackest."

V. It is FAITH.

"FAITH is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification. It is the *condition:* none is sanctified but he that believes; without faith no man is sanctified. And it is the *only condition:* this alone is sufficient for sanctification. Every one that

believes is sanctified, whatever else he has or has not. In other words, no man is sanctified till he believes; every man when he believes is sanctified." These are Mr. Wesley's words.

Such also is the teaching of another master of Israel, himself among the brightest examples of those wholly sanctified to God. "To aim aright," says the saintly Fletcher, "at this liberty of the children of God, requires a continual acting of faith; of a naked faith in a naked promise; . . . a bold, hearty, steady venturing of my soul, body, and spirit upon the truth of the promise, with an appropriating act. It is mine, because I am a sinner; and I am determined to believe, come what will."

But *what*, it may be asked, *is the faith by which we are entirely sanctified?* Let the answer be another question. What was the faith through which we received pardon? It is the same exercise of the mind and heart for the one blessing as for the other, only having respect to different promises, and other aspects of the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus. There is the same full and implicit credence given to the declarations, the promise, the oath of God; the same yielding to be saved in God's own way; the same trust in the efficacy of the Redeemer's blood; the same bold, yet humble, appropriation for one's self of *all* the benefits of His passion and death. How simple a thing did faith appear when as penitents we were enabled to venture our souls on Christ for pardon! To do it for full salvation is just as simple.

You are a child of God, seeking this perfect purity in the way that has been pointed out, and made, by Divine grace, willing to be clean. Do you not embrace the truth, and give credence to the promise that God will redeem you from all your iniquities, and create within you a clean heart? Is He not *able* to do it, and to save you to the uttermost? Is He not *willing* too? This you must admit, or make "God a liar," a thought which you cannot endure. Then will you not go a step further, and dare to say, *He doth it?* No greater warrant for this confidence do you need than that which God's own Word supplies; no greater can you have. Honour Him and His Son, your almighty, present Saviour, by claiming the blessing now.

"'T is done! Thou dost this moment save,
With full salvation bless;
Redemption through Thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace."

Seems it too great a thing? Does the thought arise—It is impossible? How can my sinful nature be thus entirely purified? How can the evil of my heart be uprooted? How can the bent of my desires and will be thus wholly and always turned God-ward? We answer: WHY NOT? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Can He not "make all grace abound toward you"? Is He not "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"? Has He not already—assuming that you are His child—effected a transformation quite as great and wonderful; nay, even more so? Whether is

greater, to bring out of darkness into light, or to free that light from clouds and mist? to change the old rebellious heart so that it should love God, or to purge this love from all contrary to itself? to raise you from total death, or to make the life you have perfectly vigorous, healthy, and strong? But those things have been done; done, in many cases, in a moment. And in the memory of the great things wrought in you at your conversion, you would feel warranted in saying to an anxious and penitent sinner, You may be pardoned just now, saved on the spot! Why then should we be thought to bring strange things to your ears when we say to you who long to be made perfectly whole, You may be entirely sanctified now? Honour the great Physician by trusting Him for a perfect cure, and immediately your leprosy shall be cleansed.

Does your heart still misgive? Are you among those described by Dr. Arnold, as he says, "It is almost too good to be hoped for, that for all they most lament and shrink from, there should be so perfect a remedy,—that all, and more than all, that their fondest imaginations could picture, of good and excellent, should be a real and sober truth"? It is not other than natural. As old Jacob's "heart fainted" when they told him that Joseph was alive, and he "believed them not;" as the disciples, gazing on their risen Redeemer, "believed not for joy:" so do many of us, conscious of our sinfulness and weakness, find it difficult to think that the surpassing blessedness of the pure in heart should ever be ours. Yet

are we not called hereunto that we should inherit this blessing? Is it not God's will concerning us? To accomplish this design, has He not given His Son? Was He not manifested that He might redeem us from all iniquity? If we estimate aright the exceeding riches of His grace to us-ward, we need not hesitate to say, "I, even I, shall see His face; I shall be holy here."

Perhaps we stagger at the promise because of *the recollection of past failures*, and the haunting fear that we shall fail again. No wonder, if we turn our mind's eye upon ourselves, instead of fixing it on Him who, having sanctified us wholly, can preserve us blameless. Steadily, boldly should we dare to believe that God is "able to keep us from falling," and, all Satan's suggestions notwithstanding, rest with calm and cheerful trust in Him who is "mighty to save."

Or *we want* some personal, present *experience* of this blessed liberty, before venturing to believe it ours; to have perfect victory over sin, perfect peace, perfect love, constant fellowship with God, ere we can deem it possible that so great a salvation may be ours. But this is as reasonable as to expect that fruit shall be gathered before the tree is planted; that the stream shall flow ere the fountain is unsealed; that the cure shall be effected though the remedies be not applied. If faith be the condition, how can the blessing be realised before we have exercised it? In the absence of feeling that it is done, in the view of all difficulties and human impossibilities, we are to give glory to God by accounting Him able and

willing to perform what He hath promised. There must be "a naked faith in a naked promise." Early in her life, Lady Maxwell consecrated herself to God in these terms: "If Thou, Lord, wilt manifest Thy dear Son to me, clear up my evidence of my interest in Him, shed abroad His love at all times in my heart, and let me feel Him ever drawing me to Himself with the cords of love, and in times of trial make His strength perfect in my weakness, and not desert me in duty nor in temptation; if Thou, Lord, wilt do these great things for me, then, in Thy strength, I give myself unto Thee, soul, body, and spirit, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten." But surely the "if" should have had no place here. There should have been a bolder strain. These things were matters of express promise; and the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God ought to have been met on the part of His child by an unhesitating, unmisgiving, steady, "Lord, I believe."

"Though nature gives my God the lie,
I all His truth and grace shall know;
I shall, the helpless creature I,
Shall perfect holiness below.

My flesh, which cries, 'It cannot be,'
Shall silence keep before the Lord;
And earth, and hell, and sin shall flee
At Jesu's everlasting word."

Indeed, is there not ground for the assertion that the blessing is often withheld until such a faith is exercised? The "nobleman" who seemed to have no conception that the Lord Jesus could

by a word, and at a distance, heal his son, needed to rest simply in the confidence of this. "Go thy way," said the Master; "thy son liveth" (John iv. 50). Happily, he faltered not. That assurance was enough for him. He "believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." Thus did the culture of his heart proceed. His erewhile poor, weak, and narrow faith was enlarged, strengthened, and deepened. So was it with the ten lepers. To their importunate appeal, Christ responded with the command, "Go, show yourselves unto the priests" (Luke xvii. 14). How natural for them to have said: Of what use can that be, all leprous as we still remain? It were a fool's errand. But they thought more worthily of the Lord, and deemed that He would not then send them to have the restraints of the leper removed, if He did not mean them to be healed by the time that they reached the priests. Their trustful obedience had its due reward. While they showed by their conduct how they honoured Jesus, and confided in His underlying promise, the fell disease departed. Not before, but then, in the act of obedient faith, their desires were fulfilled. "It came to pass, that, *as they went, they were cleansed.*" And we, longing, panting, praying to be rid, entirely and for ever, of our shame and sin, must thus dare to trust our Almighty Deliverer, even though there is not as yet the sensible token that He is thus saving us. By a trust which resolutely refuses to think it possible that He can play us false, we are to stay us in His faithful Word, and

to wait till He shall make us clean. And sooner shall the pillars of the universe tremble and fall, sooner shall the throne of the Eternal be undermined, than our confidence shall be put to shame. "You are wanting," wrote Fletcher to one of his friends, "in the venture of faith; you do not give enough of that kind of implicit confidence in Christ which says, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Now this is a lesson you must learn. Sink or swim, a believer must cast himself headlong into the boundless sea of Divine truth and love."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Sin Offering of the Consecrated.

"THE groundwork that underlies great faith and prayer is lowly poverty of spirit, and a profound sense of our ἀχρειότης, and of the debt of duty we owe to Him."—*Bengel.*

"——perfection's height,
The depth of humble love."—*Wesley.*

WHEN Aaron and his sons were set apart to their high and holy office, every precaution was taken to prevent impurity from cleaving to them. There were plenteous ablutions. Prepared garments were put upon them, garments equipping them for their various services, and emblematical of the beauty of holiness. The prescribed offerings were presented before the Lord: sin offerings to atone for guilt, and purge away defilement; and the burnt offering, typical of entire devotement to God. Still further, the ram of consecration was brought: its blood was applied to the extremities of their persons, as signifying that the whole man needed to be purified. And the anointing oil was put upon their bodies and their garments. For seven days the services were repeated. As separated and sacred persons, they went not down into their tents, but continued at the door of the tabernacle day and night. Yet, notwithstanding all this, when on the eighth day they actually entered upon the discharge of the duties of the priest's office, "Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people" (Lev. ix. 7).

We are not about to trace any exact resemblance between these proceedings and the manner

in which the royal priesthood of a new and better covenant are set apart and sanctified. Enough that there is some analogy. These, after being consecrated, and having yielded up themselves, body, soul, and spirit, unto the Lord, yet feel the need of being every moment atoned for. Even the purified are constrained to pray for pardon. They who have "the answer of a good conscience toward God," and whose hearts do not condemn them for wilful sin or neglect of duty, still come to the mercy-seat with the cry, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant." To many this seems paradoxical and contradictory. And the possibility of living in the enjoyment of entire sanctification has often been questioned on the ground that its subject could not truthfully offer the prayer which our Lord teaches, "Forgive us our sins." There must, it is contended, be an element of insincerity in such pleadings; they are unreal and make-believe.

But after thorough cleansing by the all-atoning blood, after complete consecration with the anointing oil—the Spirit's grace, the sin offering must still be brought. Just as there is, to use Mr. Wesley's phrase, a "repentance of believers," so there is a contrition of the purified, not only in the recollection of past but forgiven sin, but also in the consciousness that every moment they need an Advocate with the Father, and the merit of His death. *The recollection of guilt now cancelled* is enough to redeem such prayers from the allegation of insincerity. It is ever vivid and strong in the heart of the child of God, and

becomes the more intense as his spirituality increases. There is no condemnation, but there is holy, guiltless shame. He "grieves for having grieved his Lord, and never can himself forgive." Hence he will daily and fervently renew his prayer for pardon, and his application to the precious blood.

But further. *The saintliest are as yet compassed about with infirmity.* In physical weakness or pain they may, without incurring self-reproach as for wilful sin, yet fall short of the glow of devotion and completeness of service which they would fain realise. Or they may convey to onlookers a somewhat unattractive impression of religion. The agitation caused by a highly nervous organisation may approach near to irritability of temper. Mistakes from obtuseness of perception or unsoundness of judgment may be made. The duty of the hour may be omitted from the lack of quick understanding. A course may be pursued which, though not positively sinful, does not really tend to the glory of God. Is it not a relief to a soul, whose humble, perfect love is mixed with holy fear, to go to the throne of grace, and plead for mercy to cover all these defects and inadvertencies?

The most eminent Christians measure themselves by *the highest standard;* not by current and conventional notions, but by God's own Word. They see that the "commandment is exceeding broad." If it be kept, what a life of

ceaseless devotion! How the flame will ever and ardently burn! Both in the inmost recesses of the spirit, and the activities of the life, we shall do always the things that please God! The man whom others would regard as "an Israelite indeed" will be ready, as he thinks of all this, to cry out, "Who can understand his errors?" He will be sensitively jealous lest, even in his best and holiest services, there should lurk elements of impurity which, though undiscerned by himself, are yet "naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Perhaps no saintlier man ever walked this earth than Fletcher of Madeley. He was a living embodiment of perfect love. But he deeply felt the need of casting himself on the mercy of God. "His humility," wrote the Rev. Henry Venn, "was so unfeigned, and so deep, that when I thanked him for two sermons, which he had one day preached to my people at Huddersfield, he answered as no man ever did to me, in a way the most affecting I can conceive. With eyes and hands uplifted, he exclaimed, 'Pardon, pardon, O my God!' It went to my very soul: I shall never forget it."

Then too, even when entirely sanctified, we shall be conscious of *the defective degree* (in one sense) *of our religion.* Who that loves the glorious and blessed Redeemer can love enough? Who honours Him with the rapt, adoring, reverent homage which is His due? Whose heart kindles and bounds as it ought to do at the mention

of His ineffably precious name? Whose soul springs forth towards Him as His transcendent worth and dying love should make it do? Who that knows Him can help exclaiming—

> "Weak is the effort of my heart,
> And cold my warmest thought"?

And the purer our love is, the more we feel as if it were anything but so ardent, absorbing, and lofty as it should be. All genuine affection, when placed on a worthy object, engenders such fear. Witness the tender apprehensions of true conjugal love that enough has never been done for that one who in its eyes is "all the world." Where there has been no known neglect, or selfishness, or indifference, there is, however, the apprehension that in some things there has been failure.

The writer has the fragrant memory of a young friend, beautiful in person, and still more beautiful in character, who went to the heaven for which she was so meet more than twenty years ago. In her childhood both her parents died, and she went to reside with an uncle, who brought her up. On the night when she passed through the valley, she began to tell him (by finger talk, as he was deaf) of her warm gratitude for all his kindness and care, and then went on to beg his forgiveness for having in any instance grieved him. "My child," he said, "I don't know what you mean; you have never for an instant displeased me." Is not this an illustration of how those who love God supremely, and serve

Him with all their powers, cannot help fearing that after all they have grieved Him ?

Entire sanctification is not the ultimatum of religious experience, not the goal of the runner for the unfading crown. It is rather the starting-point of a clear course, and he who has reached it, confessing that he has not yet attained, will eagerly and always press toward the mark. No one longs and pants so much after higher attainments in piety as he who is cleansed from all sin. *But the more he aspires, the more he mourns that he falls beneath his own aspirations.* Just as with a taste more highly cultivated, blemishes and faults are more quickly discovered, and give greater annoyance; as the more refined is the musical ear, the greater torture does discord cause; as the nearer any one approaches perfection, the more aware he is of remaining deficiencies; so, in like manner, when the soul's interior eye is fully purged, spots and blemishes are sooner discerned, and the need of that blood, which can cleanse from every stain, is more keenly and constantly felt.

Yes; the sin offering must yet be offered for the wholly consecrated. Lips on which the live coal from the altar has been laid still plead for mercy. The holiest will own with Bishop Beveridge, "I am verily persuaded, should I spend all my time, my parts, my strength, my gifts, for God—should I employ each moment of my life in the immediate worship of my glorious Creator,

so that all my actions should be but one continued act of holiness and obedience—in a word, should I live like an angel in heaven, and die like a saint on earth, yet I know no truer, nor should I desire any better, epitaph to be engraven upon my tomb than this, 'Here lies an unprofitable servant.' No, no; it is Christ, and Christ alone, that my soul must support itself upon. As the worst of my sins are pardonable by Christ, so are the best of my duties damnable without Him."

CHAPTER IX.

"Who Touched Me?"

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT REQUIRED.

"COME and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul."—*Ps.* lxvi. 16.

"AND shall I slight my Father's love?
Or basely fear His gifts to own?
Unmindful of His favours prove?
Shall I, the hallowed cross to shun,
Refuse His righteousness to impart,
By hiding it within my heart?"—*Wesley.*

WHY did the good and great Physician ask this question, and tarry for, yea, even insist upon, an answer? Not surely that the credit and honour of the miracle might redound to Him. He was "meek and lowly in heart," and there was ever a beautiful unostentatiousness about Him. His voice was not heard in the streets in pretentious boastings; His works were not heralded by a flourish of trumpets; He did not look around for applause. Sometimes after performing mighty and beneficent deeds He stole away into privacy; sometimes He forbade the recipients of His mercy to publish it abroad. And He brought out the fact of this cure from no hankering after the praise of men.

Neither was it because He was unaware what had gone on behind Him. He was conscious that "virtue had gone out of Him." He doubtless knew to whom, and by what process of faith on her part. Her sore need, her reasoning "within herself," her trembling, believing touch, were all naked and open to His eyes.

Yet He inquired after the recipient of His healing power; and when the answer was not immediately forthcoming, "He looked round about to see her that had done this thing." She naturally shrank from publicity, and would fain have gone away without owning what had happened. To

do this cost her an effort, a struggle, until at length, "fearing and trembling," she "came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." Now nothing is more certain than that *the Lord Jesus, tenderly considerate as He was and full of compassion, would never have subjected her to such an ordeal, but that most important ends were thus served.* Her confession was so much additional testimony to His ability to save and heal, and would embolden others to trust in Him. The superstitious error that mingled with her fine faith was thus corrected, and she was made aware that she had not been healed by any magical influence that emanated from His body. By being brought to tell what benefit she had received, she was saved from the self-reproach which afterwards would have stung her, for having first filched a cure, and then been so ungrateful and mean as not to own her Benefactor. Moreover, a greater good was secured by her acknowledgment of the signal benefit just received; "this woman had borne away a maimed blessing, hardly a blessing at all, had she been suffered to bear it away in secret and unacknowledged." *

We rejoice to know that the power of the Lord is still present to heal, and that many souls are being cleansed from sin, and restored to perfect soundness and spiritual health. When first conscious what great things have been done for them, some, partly from natural disposition, partly from groundless fear, and partly from

* ABP. TRENCH: *Notes on the Miracles.*

temptation, shrink from confessing it. There lies on the writer's desk a note just received from one of his flock telling how, after having trusted Jesus to cleanse her from all sin, she knew as never before Paul's meaning when he said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," and how her joy is deep, and her mind "lost in wonder, love, and praise." She goes on: "I fear to let any one know my present experience, lest I should again fall. Is this right? Should I (when in class, for instance) boldly tell what God has done for me?"

Now the heart has its own logic. The sanctified instinct of a soul touched and purified by Jesus is a safe guide in such a matter. And *what is the first impulse, the imperative and almost resistless impulse, of one so visited?* This may be trusted and obeyed. And is it not to cry out, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul"? The joy refuses to be pent up, and thus smothered. Love must avow itself. Gratitude cannot be hid; its tokens, in the suffused and beaming eye, the warm word, the devoted service, will inevitably be forthcoming. Beyond all question, the sacred, blessed, precious emotions which possess the heart where Jesus has set up His throne, and brought with Him the royal largess of liberty and righteousness and peace, ought to have way. "No one ever thinks it a matter of delicacy, or genuine modesty, entirely to suppress any reasonable joy; least of all, any fit testimony of gratitude toward a deliverer and for a deliverance. In such

a case no one ever asks, What is the use? where is the propriety? for it is the simple instinct of his nature to speak; and he speaks." *

What is more: *by the speaking the gratitude is deepened and intensified.* In the very utterance and manifestation of feelings, they are confirmed and made permanent. If all this has been done at first, with fear and trembling, how rich a reward has been realised in the higher joy, serene and assured, which the confession has brought! When "the fire within" *breaks out*, does it not burn with a greater ardour, and show itself in a brighter and steadier flame? The heart glows and fills with a diviner love, when out of its abundance we humbly and reverently declare what great blessings have been bestowed. When our lips speak of the things touching the King and His great salvation, He becomes more and more glorious in our eyes. When the bride rejoicingly proclaims the excellency and beauty of her "beloved among the sons," then does she sit "down under his shadow with delight, and his fruit is sweet to her taste." To own the grace given is a sure method of having it stablished, strengthened, and settled. The Master will say to the timid and shrinking one at His feet who declares before others how she has been healed: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." And with this word of the King there will be power.

On the other hand, repression and silence

* Dr. H. Bushnell: *The New Life.*

smother emotion; and if we fail to avow our obligations to our great Healer, it will inevitably damage our spiritual nature. "Concealment, like a worm i' th' bud," ever withers the plants of righteousness, and helps to destroy their bloom, verdure, and life. "What multitudes are there," says one, "in whom God is just beginning to be revealed, who by some false modesty, some morbid thought of prudence, refusing to be natural and simple, take the mode of silence, secrecy, or suppression, and so in a very few days or months fatally stifle the grace of salvation!" Is it not to be feared that it is thus with some in whom the very God of peace more fully reveals Himself by sanctifying them wholly?

There is another consideration which will weigh much with those in whose hearts the Lord Jesus is enthroned. *Testimony to His ability to save even to the uttermost*, borne by such as have happily experienced it, *will embolden others to trust Him*. In the throng that pressed around Jesus there stood one who had left his little daughter at the point of death. The delay caused by the Saviour's wishing to bring out the acknowledgment of the cure wrought by touching His garment must have been agony to Jairus. And when the dread words fell on his ear, "Thy daughter is dead," his heart would sink almost into despondency. "Fear not," said the Master; "only believe, and she shall be made whole." How greatly would he be helped to believe by what he had just now witnessed and heard!

You cannot humbly declare how great things God hath done for you without encouraging some trembling and fainting soul, and kindling desire after like precious blessings. Others will be stimulated to follow after holiness, others strengthened to take hold of it. Will not the glad and exulting doxology that breaks from those who have been fully emancipated from sin's thraldom and pollution induce others to believe that the same liberty shall be obtained by them? So shall glory redound to the Deliverer, and blessing be diffused among His people.

Let one or two cautionary remarks be added.

It is far from being meant that the innermost workings of the soul are to be exposed to every passer by. There is much that is sacred in our aspirations, our conflicts, hopes, and fears; and the veil of the heart is not to be lifted to a rude gaze. Christ's precept (Matt. vii. 6) is paraphrased thus by Mr. Wesley: "Talk not of the deep things of God to those whom you know to be wallowing in sin; neither declare the great things God hath done for your soul to the profane, furious, persecuting wretches. Talk not of perfection, for instance, to the former; nor of your own experience to the latter." The listeners to such testimony should have at least some congeniality with the theme, some reverence for things Divine, and be able to "approve things that are excellent." When the psalmist would publish God's merciful dealings with him, he seeks as his audience "all" them "that fear God." It is these who can with

intelligence and appreciation listen to details of the highest Christian experience, and sympathise with the utterance of affections the most spiritual and saintly. Due regard being had to the proprieties of time and place, these will drink in, and profit by, witness to the power of Jesus to save to the uttermost.

Is it needful to remark that frequent talking, even on these subjects, will waste and evaporate the "living water" that is in us, unless again and again we leave the world, its men, and its affairs, that we may repair to the everlasting Fountain? The hidden life can be sustained and invigorated only by "secret intercourse with God."

In professing that this full salvation is enjoyed, there should be sensitively jealous care to guard against even the semblance of boasting, and to ascribe all the glory to God. Without this our good will be evil spoken of; others will be repelled by what may seem a hateful assumption of spiritual superiority; and it may be that "the secret pride, the subtle sin," will again steal into the breast, and grieve the Holy Spirit. "It is much safer," says Professor Upham, "and is certainly much more profitable, to speak of what has been done for us and wrought in us, to speak for instance of ourselves as the recipients of the goodness of God, than to speak of what we ourselves have done. But even here also, although it may often be an imperative duty, there is need of deliberation and caution." Ever will simplicity, modesty, lowliness be "acceptable unto God, and approved of men." And when conscious

liberty and happiness constrain us to testify of the grace of God, never let it be as if there were any approach to the spirit that would say, "Stand by thyself; come not near to me, for I am holier than thou." There is an art of putting things; and it is much more seemly to declare that *God has bestowed* than that *we have attained*. It is moreover infinitely less perilous to the delicate bloom and perfect soundness of our own piety. They are wise counsels which Dr. Bunting gave: "Do not hide your light; do not be afraid or ashamed to bear testimony to the work of God: but, as you wish the testimony to be useful to others and safe to yourselves, in giving it maintain the spirit of meekness and fear, of humility and seriousness."

"GO, . . . AND TELL HOW GREAT THINGS THE LORD HATH DONE FOR THEE, AND HATH HAD COMPASSION ON THEE" (Mark v. 19).

CHAPTER X.

The Work but Begun.

"To expect that God should at once place the soul in that condition into which, in the fulness of time, it is to ripen, is to expect that the seasons of the year should be thrown headlong upon one another in a heap, and that there should be neither buds nor blossoms, though they have their peculiar use, beauty, and fragrancy; but that it should be autumn all the year round."—*Henry More.*

WE are never to forget that Entire Sanctification is not the acme or *ne plus ultra* of Christian experience. It is not the goal, but rather a new starting-point. After cleansing, there must be the "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." A steady and constant growth in grace is the ideal of the religious life. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. iv. 18). Even when that perfect day has come, there will be perpetual advancement in knowledge, in purity, in all spiritual excellence, and in consummate blessedness. Height after height will be scaled; depth after depth will be sounded. Brighter hues will mingle; sweeter and loftier strains be heard. And while here, gaining meetness for that inheritance, there should be a continual progression in the knowledge and love of God.

We would therefore in this chapter suggest some things which may be helpful towards this most desirable end. None will more eagerly and thankfully avail themselves of such aids than they who can truly say, "Herein is our love made perfect." They long to love God more ardently. They labour fervently in prayers that they may "stand perfect and complete in *all* the will of God." The apostle who speaks of himself as among those that are "perfect," yet in the same

breath utters his disclaimer, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," *i.e.*, perfected. The more the pure, celestial fire glows and burns, the higher the flame rises. The higher we climb, the more the horizon enlarges to the view. When God is enjoyed as the soul's Portion and Rest, the more it "follows hard after" Him.

I. We begin with COMING TO THE LIGHT.

On once pointing out to a young Christian that a certain thing in her habits was not "as becometh saints," her reply was, "I never saw it in that light before; I had not thought of it." She had gone on without condemnation or self-reproach on that account. But now that the whole had been brought before her, the wrong was admitted and forsaken. It may be even thus with one who has entered into the full liberty of the Gospel. And lest it should, we are bound to challenge our spirit and deportment, to try our ways, to come to the light.

It is easy to perceive that there will be the opposite of this where the heart is not truly and fully honest before God. The consciousness of neglect of duty, or the indulgence of some secret, bosom sin, or even a lurking fear that all is not right, may make us shun inquiry. The trader over whose mind the shadow of insolvency is creeping will be loth to examine his liabilities and assets. Thus it was that a man persisted in refusing to read *Mammon*, the prize-essay on Covetousness, for fear he should be convicted of

dereliction of duty. He dared not; would not. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John iii. 20). And even in the case of upright and godly men there is often, probably through carelessness, a want of full, honest inquiry into God's will, and into the characteristics of righteousness and sin. It is quietly assumed that all is right. There is no searching scrutiny of motive, temper, speech, conduct. There is no *applying God's law as the rule of action and the touchstone of character*. Hence, while the man is not a hypocrite, yet there are inconsistencies in the walk, and discordant notes in the life which should be one hymn of praise.

The maintenance of inward and outward purity is greatly dependent on the due enlightening and cultivation of the conscience. It should be trained to perceive and understand what the will of the Lord is. There should be an increasingly clear apprehension of truth; a quicker and more accurate perception of duty and danger; spiritual "senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Sometimes the lines of demarcation are so faint and so shaded off, that only a practised eye can see them. We may be easily deluded by counterfeit virtues; and, on the other hand, may write bitter things against ourselves where a "sound mind" would give a different verdict. A perilous snare is sometimes separated from an incumbent duty by no more than a hair's breadth; lawful affection may almost imperceptibly glide into heart-idolatry.

Charles Wesley's hymn commencing,

> "Come, Thou omniscient Son of man,
> Display Thy sifting power,"

was written "for any who think they have already attained." How searching is its strain! One almost shrinks with awe as, realising that He understandeth our thought afar off and is acquainted with all our ways, we present ourselves before Him, and sincerely, thoughtfully, earnestly pray, "*Look through us with Thy eyes of flame.*" What a daring, solemn request! We feel that piercing gaze. We sink in the dust at His feet. We loathe ourselves. We are covered with shame—"guiltless shame"—while we are made more fully than ever to rely on the all-cleansing blood, and to claim its utmost efficacy for ourselves. Yet will this prayer, the prayer of the soul in its most hushed, true, and serious mood, be presented by all who would approve themselves unto God. And the more they see reason to rejoice that they

> "—all His fulness know
> From every sin set free,"

the more will they come into that holy and heart-searching Presence with the cry, "Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart" (Ps. xxvi. 2). *The answer to this prayer will most probably disclose to us hidden evils.* We shall find out that a course had been pursued, or a state of mind indulged, which at the time we did not perceive to be questionable or wrong. Hence there was no condemnation because of it.

But was our persuasion that we had received the cleansing virtue of Jesus' blood, and thus been sanctified wholly, a delusion? Scarcely so. For sin (to use Mr. Wesley's words) is "a voluntary transgression of a known law of God," it being assumed that we had honestly used all the means then available for obtaining such knowledge. We did not at that time perceive how exceeding broad was the commandment. And because we did not then know the law so fully as now, we condemned not ourselves in that which we allowed. Yet it was really sin. Tried by the standard of immaculate righteousness, it was faulty. Hence we cannot speak of *sinless* perfection. But where the *will*—that true seat of moral attributes—has been so blended and completely harmonized with God's, that aught contrary to this could not for one moment be indulged or tolerated, could not even exist, there would be freedom from what would bring condemnation. And when at length, as the result of deeper thought, fuller scrutiny, and clearer light, a course is seen to be unworthy of a follower of the Lamb, we must at once renounce it, or peace with God and purity of heart cannot for one hour be retained. Even when entirely sanctified, we are bound still honestly and prayerfully to inquire whether all in us, all thoughts, purposes, words, actions, are according to God's will. They who have, in infinite love, been brought into the way of holiness, must still, with the clearer spiritual vision, quickened sensibilities, and godly jealousy which they have received, *take heed* thereto according to God's Word. "He that

doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John iii. 21).

II. Repairing to the Fountain.

When by means of such searching as is described above, we are made aware of evils that were never known, never suspected before, it will probably be the enemy's policy to make us cast away our confidence; to discourage and thereby weaken us; to rob us of that joy of the Lord which is our strength. Let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices. Let us frustrate them by repairing again, and that at once, to the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. We have bared our bosom to the Great Physician, and asked Him to probe us to the quick, and to cut out any gangrene of sin that may still be festering there. Let us not in the smart forget what sovereign, efficacious balm He can apply, and that it is applied only so far forth as we by faith claim its utmost efficacy.

When we received and relied on the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, this act of faith was not performed once for all. It was thereafter to be perpetually renewed. It was to become the *habit* of our renewed spirit. The *life* we live in the flesh must be *by the faith of the Son of God.* By abiding in Him we are kept from sin, preserved clean, and made to bring forth the much fruit by which our Father in heaven will be glorified. "I see," said William Carvosso, who for so many years walked in the light of God, and rejoiced in full salvation, "I see more and more clearly

that faith is the root from which all the branches of holiness grow. Christ is the Vine, and we are the branches, grafted into Him by faith before we can bring forth fruit. We are not to rank faith among the other graces, but to account it the foundation of them all." "Looking unto Jesus," must ever be our attitude; our life work, clinging to Him.

"Saviour, from Thy wounded side
I never will depart;
Here will I my spirit hide
When I am pure in heart:
Till my place above I claim,
This only shall be all my plea,
Friend of sinners, spotless Lamb,
Thy blood was shed for me."

III. DISCERNING THINGS THAT DIFFER.

It is of the last importance that we have spiritual "senses exercised to discern both good and evil," and a clear and keen perception of the distinctions between them. Otherwise we may be brought into bondage again.

1. For example: *Temptation is not sin.* The fault of evil counsel is his who offers it; no blame rests on him by whom it is spurned. No taint comes on the spirit from temptation which is at once and utterly rejected. Our gracious and glorious High Priest was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15). At times it may not be easy to ascertain whether certain states of mind are the result of temptation, or the uprising of the remaining evil of our own nature. An arduous duty has been discharged

with some success, so as to secure the end desired, and perhaps to win the commendations of others. It may then be a little difficult to say whether the satisfaction felt is legitimate and innocent, or whether it is the uplifting of lingering pride; or, if it bear the latter aspect, how far it is to be attributed to the suggestions of the evil one. Not every one can be so certain as was the Yorkshire evangelist, Squire Brooke, that its source was from beneath. He unhesitatingly maintained that it was Satan who whispered to him, "You preached well." And the adversary was at once foiled by all the glory being ascribed to God. "Yes," replied the good man; "God helped me." When such apparently evil thoughts are not spontaneous, but suggested; when they are opposed to the usual tenor of our feelings; when they awaken no response and kindle no desire; when there comes over our soul a shudder and a recoil; when they cause us intense pain, we may be safe in concluding that they are not our own; nor need self-reproach ensue. The cloud that passes in mid-heaven above the lake sleeping in beauty below, though it casts a shadow on the waters, does not disturb or defile them. Nor is there pollution in the spirit simply by these *temptations passing over* it. Yet even then it were wise and safe immediately to own them before God, and to ask that if aught displeasing to Him has been unwittingly contracted, it may be pardoned and purged away.

2. Again: *Singleness of motive*, on which so much stress is properly laid, does *not* mean that

only one motive should actuate us, but that regard to the will of God should be beyond all question the highest, and every other consideration, desire, or aim, should be in complete and constant subordination to that. Few, if any, actions spring from one motive alone. Generally they have many sources, just as there are many rivulets at the foot of Lebanon which unitedly form the source of the Jordan. Our words and ways are often the outcome of numerous motives at work within. None should be contrary to the will of God; all minor ones must be totally subordinate to this supreme purpose, "To do Thy will, O God."

3. There are certain *original propensities* of our nature which, if kept under due subservience and control, and used only for right ends, are innocent, pure, and good; adapted to the condition and circumstances of man, and in some sense essential to his happiness and well-being. It is the excess, the perversion, the abuse of them that constitutes sin. The dream of ascetic piety has been to eradicate and exterminate them; the effort of an enlightened piety—how arduous often!—will be to regulate them. One of the most mischievous, polluting, foul, and cruel sins, that which "hardens all within," what is it but the excess and abuse of a lawful appetite? So anger, that brief madness, fierce and relentless, is the perversion of the resentment which, as Bishop Butler has shown, is an essential constituent of our moral nature, and an indispensable condition of spiritual excellence. The absence of deep displacence at what is evil, of disgust with it, of indignation against

it, is a lamentable defect of character; and a "readiness to revenge all disobedience" to the highest law is an excellence. But how soon may all this be exaggerated and sinful! How needful is it to watch against all peevishness, irritability, and selfish anger; much more against all deep-rooted malice, and passionate paroxysms, and base revenge; against even that "unwholesome fermentation of the original passion, produced by the leaven which has wrought in man's heart since the fall, and which has turned what was originally a generous wine into acrid vinegar."

That there is an anger without sin, is manifest from its dwelling even in the heart of Infinite Love; it is again and again ascribed to God. He is "angry with the wicked every day" (Ps. vii. 11). "Who may stand in Thy sight when once Thou art angry?" (Ps. lxxvi. 7.) "The wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6). So the Lord Jesus, the perfect embodiment of purity and love, "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts" (Mark iii. 5). These solemn and awful declarations are often put out of sight, or explained away, in much of current literature, and maudlin, sentimental theology. But they are part of that "Word of God" which "abideth for ever." Of course, God's anger is not turbulent passion, nor selfish malice, nor blind fury, nor bloodthirsty revenge. It is rather His deep displeasure against sin; His infinite abhorrence of it; His calm, steady, inviolable resolve to punish it. Without it, He could

not command our reverence and trust. "A God all mercy," weakly conniving at evil, slackening the reins of government, and laying down the sceptre, "is a God unjust." *

Still, while we thus maintain that in a perfect moral nature there must be anger, so understood, we may never forget how in our infirmity and ruin there is constant danger of anger being transported beyond due bounds, and becoming altogether sinful. The very fact that when we use the word without some qualifying epithet, it is at once understood to mean what is blamable, is monitory enough. It is too sad an indication that it is most difficult to be "angry, *and sin not.*" When it beclouds the intellect, and renders us for the time incapable of taking just views; when it is without sufficient cause, and we are irritated by trifles, roused by imaginary slights, insults, and injuries, and thrown into paroxysms of rage and exasperation, if provoked; when it stays too long, and the wrath is "nursed to keep it warm;" when it is selfish, excited chiefly because our inclinations and interests are crossed, our plans of procedure thwarted; when it makes us wish another's suffering simply, instead of seeking only his true welfare, and the good of society at large; when there is a malignant pleasure in the smart or shame of him who has provoked it, and the inward thought is, "Aha! so would we have it;" when it indisposes us to forgiveness; when it gives birth to unbecoming and splenetic speech,

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* See Note A at the end of this chapter.

venting itself in clamour and evil speaking; when it prompts to retaliation and rendering evil for evil; or when it unfits us for communion with God, and is "a total alienation of the mind from prayer," then is it blameworthy and sinful. And, alas! who can tell how oft he has thus offended?

This line of remark might be pursued in reference to other original and lawful propensities of our nature. But the reflective reader, with whom "the secret of the Lord" is, will not have much difficulty in discriminating between the right and the wrong, the precious and the vile. He will, *e.g.*, perceive how the innocent desire of society is very different from that dread of solitude which too sadly indicates that the man dares not come face to face with his own soul, with an approaching eternity, with a heart-searching and omniscient God; how lawful emulation is one thing, and unhallowed ambition another; how there may be an instinctive shrinking from suffering, without guilty murmuring or cowardice; how there may be a pure desire to be loved, while there is no unreasonable jealousy, nor undue claim to attention and preference; how there is exquisite pleasure in friends and kindred, yet not necessarily making idols of them; how the wish to possess the "good name" which is "rather to be chosen than great riches," does not inevitably involve improper sensitiveness to the opinion of others, or guilty complaisance; how, in a word, self-love is lawful and helpful, while selfishness is the quintessence of sin.

4. Once more, on this point of discerning

things that differ. *Emotion* doubtless plays a considerable and important part in our religious life. Without it, there would not be that which impels to devotedness, diligence, cultivation of the heart, and fulfilling the whole round of religious duties. What steam is to machinery, that emotion is to practice. But we must not confound the liveliness of a feeling with its strength; they are often found in inverse ratio. Sparkle and effervescence are not always associated with real might. The highest power is calm. We must not mistake mere sentiment—often vapid and worthless—for principle. We must not unduly appraise great excitement of feeling. It will come, and sometimes with overpowering force. But religion is not a rapture. Amid every-day duties, in the struggle against evil, sympathising with the sorrow that is everywhere, strenuously striving to rescue men from the bitter, blasting curse of sin, and afflicted because of the dishonour done to our Saviour and God, the general tone of our feelings may be subdued and solemn. Not on this side the river shall we find a paradise of delicious and uninterrupted enjoyment. We could not in our present condition sustain continuous high excitement of feeling. The sword would wear out the scabbard. The hidden fires would consume the material fabric. Hence excessive joy or grief soon subsides. While thankful, therefore, for whatever cheer and consolation may be vouchsafed, let there be no unhealthy craving for what would merely or transiently exhilarate. Happiest shall we be when desire for

more grace is not suffered to evaporate in mere sentimental longings, but is instantly followed by efforts to obtain it; when the flame of love burns brightly and steadily; when our exultation in God is chastened by the sense of our utter unworthiness, and the "wonder, Why such love to me?" when with our highest bliss there blends the deepest reverence; when the peace of God rules in our hearts and guards them from evil; when we rest in God's will, and there is brought to our inmost spirits a refreshing like that which "sleep sheds over heart and brain;" when in silent joy we lean on Jesus and find Him our All in all.

IV. WATCHING UNTO PRAYER.

Never may we safely forget the admonition which says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 John 8). It is true that we are less likely to forsake the Saviour when we have tasted the fulness and sweetness of His grace; that the flame of holy love when burning ardently will not ordinarily soon flicker and expire; that a life of faith will probably become a settled and stablished life. Yet we may never pretermit jealous care over ourselves. However pure, we shall not in this life be impeccable. So the cherished habit of our soul should be one of lowly self-distrust, of vigilant observance of the wiles of the enemy, and of sedulous care lest we should be again entangled in the pollutions of the world and overcome.

It is not unlikely that *the very profession we make will the more expose us to the* subtle, relentless, and powerful *assaults of the enemy of souls.* Our arch-adversary waits for all occasions to beguile us into evil, and to work our ruin; and never is he more vigorous, crafty, or resolved than when there is a chance of overcoming a devoted servant of God. He knows what dishonour will come to the cause of Christ if such a one waver and fall; what a panic is struck into the host "when a standard-bearer fainteth." His policy is therefore that of the king of Syria, when he commanded the "captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel" (1 Kings xxii. 31). Against the men of renown in Christ's army will Satan's wiliest stratagems be played off; at them will his deadliest thrusts be aimed. If a Jebus that seemed so impregnable can be successfully besieged and stormed, then the city, the district will lie at the conqueror's feet. Hence we must quit ourselves like men, and be strong. We cannot, no, not for an hour, leave the post of observation and defence. Holy thoughts and believing prayers must form a complete cordon round our hearts through which the enemy can never break.*

V. ADORNING OUR PROFESSION.

Much prejudice against the doctrine of Entire Sanctification has been excited by the unlovely

* See Note B at the end of the chapter.

behaviour of some who have professed it. These have presented an unattractive phase (to use a mild epithet) of character. In the exercise of fidelity there has been rudeness; zeal has been mingled with something like bitterness; sanctimoniousness mistaken for sanctity. Now there may be the most thorough and unfailing maintenance of whatsoever things are true, and just, and pure, along with such as are lovely and of good report. It surely does not need what is coarse, morose, repulsive, to vindicate our devotion to Christ. Nay, rather; there may be the precious gem of supreme loyalty to Him and separation from the world and sin, in a setting of what is refined, winning, gentle, and courteous. Old George Herbert speaks thus:

> "Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation
> Upon thy body, clothes, and habitation."

And they who have perfect rest in God as their portion, may well have a sunny countenance, and be tranquil in behaviour. They who love their neighbour as themselves will abstain from what is annoying and repulsive. The sweet, sacred peace which is the guerdon of purity, should have such an influence on speech and manners as will attract others to the way of holiness. By works which are good—not only right, just, and holy, but morally beautiful (καλά),—men may be made to glorify our Father which is in heaven.

The girl Frances Ridley Havergal was "a very fairy with her golden curls and light step;" a little older, "carolling like a bird she flashed

into the room, flashed in like a burst of sunshine, like a hillside breeze." Nor did she lose the ineffable grace when she had fully yielded up herself to "the King," and there welled up from the depths of her heart the Consecration Hymn. All along, and to the end, she was as sweet as she was saintly. "She left a sunbeam track in many cottages." "Bright, quick cheeriness characterised all she did." No wonder that she drew people to her like a magnet. How beautiful the picture of her, in mortal weakness riding along through the village, while "quite a procession gathered round her, her regiment of boys eagerly listening." And though but few have such beauty of person, or such ravishing poetry and music in the soul, yet it is worth our while to aim at being like sunshine in our homes, and to "*speak bright*, BRIGHT WORDS ABOUT JESUS," as she on her deathbed urged.

We may even venture to say that the holiest, as being filled with the gentleness and goodness which are parts of the fruit of the Spirit, "sweet reasonableness" and benignity, will be truly polite. Cold, formal, hollow ceremony does not deserve to be called politeness. An acute philosopher has said, "Politeness is the natural effect of that benevolence which regards always with sympathetic complacency, and is fearful of disturbing, even by the slightest momentary uneasiness, the serenity of others. . . . It is something far more dignified in its nature than the cold courtesies which pass current under that name. . . . It is the moral grace of life, if I may venture so to

term it, the grace of the mind ; and what the world calls graces are little more than graces of the body." * Where should this be seen, if not in the follower of the Lord Jesus ? He who is "perfect in love" will surely "look on the things of others," study their comfort, abstain (so far as is consistent with the highest duty) from what would repel, annoy, and pain, be always ready to oblige, and seek to diffuse around him cheerfulness, serenity, and good-will. "The existence of true holiness of heart will immediately impart to every one who is the subject of it, a seriousness and modesty of demeanour, a propriety and justness of manners, combined with a sympathy in the happiness of others, which will commend itself at once to the best judges on this subject." †

Two words are employed in 2 Thess. iii. 13, which are not in the compound form found elsewhere in the New Testament. The "well-doing" "is not," says the learned and devout Dean Vaughan, "beneficence, the doing good of which we have so much in Scripture. It is the beauty, the moral beauty of the new man in Christ, which this particular word brings into view. . . . St. Paul had a keen eye for the beautiful, if not in nature, certainly in grace. He loved to contemplate the grander, the nobler, the more glorious attributes of humanity, as they develop themselves under the influence of the healthful Spirit of God's grace and the continual dew of His blessing."

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* BROWN : *Philosophy of the Human Mind.* Lect. lxxxvi.

† PROF. UPHAM : *The Life of Faith.*

"The other word is the 'be not weary.' I know not whether it is more than mere accident —but I am struck with the collision of the two opposites—the καλός and the κακός the beautiful and the base—in the two compounds before us. 'Be not weary,' *i.e.*, Wax not base, in your beautiful life. The baseness spoken of is that faint heart which makes cowards of us, that sinking of the spirit in the face of toil or peril, which, in the one case, breeds sluggards, and which, in the other case, breeds deserters. Be not faint-hearted in that glorious work which is yours as Christians; for, if you suffer that ugly influence to steal over you, there is an end at once of all nobleness and greatness."

VI. LIVING IN THE PRESENT.

There is much sound practical wisdom in counsel which the writer often heard when a boy in a Methodist class-meeting: Live a moment at a time, and that moment for God. In harmony with it is the advice of one whom Dr. Kitto admired and loved beyond any other man for his singularly pure and disinterested spirit: "Think not on a holy life, but on a holy moment as it flies. The first overwhelms the heart by its immensity; the other sweetens and refreshes by its lightness and present stimulus; and yet a succession of holy moments constitutes a holy life."

Fruitless regrets over the irremediable past only waste time, and relax the moral fibre. It is well to note the mistakes and failures of the past in order to avoid a repetition of them, thus learn-

ing wisdom (at how great a cost!) from experience. And we are often heartened and comforted by the retrospect of seasonable help afforded, and deliverances wrought out for us. But all this is different from vain lamentations over faded joys, departed pleasures, "the tender grace of a day that is dead;" different from brooding over by-gone and forgiven sins. We must leave these, "let the dead past bury its dead," and arise and follow the Master. We must faithfully and promptly discharge the duty of the hour now with us, but so swiftly passing away. Things are in a condition of constant flux and change. Often on the ruins of the past may the wise rear a beautiful and stately structure. Though it is not without a certain pensiveness that we see the falling leaves of autumn, yet that should be relieved by the thought that they will enrich the soil, and in the spring-time others will come in their place.

Nor may we live in the future. We are not to neglect claims next us in dreaming that days to come will bring in better opportunities of serving God and our generation. We are not to be dismayed by the prospect of possible difficulties and trials. There will only be one at a time. And the cares and sorrows we dread may never come if they do, the needed grace, the effectual succour, will come along with them. Why fear the unseen future? That can but enervate and disquiet. He was a happy man who thanked God that he had not for many a year *known any to-morrow.*

Thus also Hester Ann Rogers: "Satan would

lead me to doubt or care for to-morrow; saying such and such a thing is at hand, and will overcome thee. Thou wilt fall in some of thy trials; or, when death comes, thou wilt be under a cloud. But, through Divine grace, I am enabled to discern whence these suggestions come, and they never distress me for a moment; for by constantly looking to Jesus, I receive fresh strength in every time of need." Live then in the present; enjoying the blessings carried in its bosom, discharging incumbent duties, and never disquieting yourself in vain because of conflicts and troubles which may never come. In the restless heart, what is godly can never be matured. Growth in grace is a delicate process, and calm is needed for it. The beautiful crystals are not formed when the liquid is agitated and turbid; and it is only when the peace of God rules in the heart that gems for the Redeemer's diadem are produced. When the storm is raging around him the mariner has to trim his sails to the wind and tack about, instead of making headway, and going in a swift and straight course to the desired haven.

VII. PRESSING FORWARD.

But we are to be *far otherwise than contented* with present attainments. He who is indeed sanctified wholly will be eager for advancement, "reaching forth unto those things which are before." He will ardently aspire after higher blessings, and pant for closer communion with God. Cleansed from sin, he will strenuously and diligently seek for Christian maturity that he may bring forth

all the fruits of righteousness, and "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." The first Napoleon believed that still more conquests were necessary to the very existence of his empire; only by pushing its boundaries farther and farther, could he retain the territory he had acquired. If, having come up out of the wilderness of doubt and fear and inbred sin, we have entered the Canaan of perfect love, and are satisfied with its rich and plenteous store, yet must we never forget that "there remaineth much land to be possessed." To attempt to store up the manna we have gathered will be certain to make it corrupt. Our ceaseless, prayerful effort must be to gain more knowledge, better blessedness, robuster virtue, deeper sanctity, more abundant life. Then shall our path be as "the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." It shall be as the light in its purity, its pleasantness, its sweet, mighty influence;

> Quiet and gentle, clear and fair as light;
> Yet full of its all-penetrating power,
> Its silent but resistless influence.

Then in the "perfect day," having been made by God's wondrous love, the sprinkling of Jesus' blood, and the mighty energy of the Spirit, "pure in heart," we shall, in the highest sense, "see God" —His bright, unclouded face, and be for ever and perfectly LIKE HIM.

"NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US,

UNTO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH BY CHRIST JESUS THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN."

NOTE A.

"Anger is one of the sinews of the soul; he that wants it hath a maimed mind, and, like Jacob, sinew-shrunk in the hollow of his thigh, must needs halt; nor is it good to converse with a man that cannot be angry."

DR. THOMAS FULLER: *The Holy State.*

"Anger is the rising up of the heart in passionate displacency against . . . evil. It is given us by God for good, to stir us up to a vigorous resistance of those things, which, within us or without us, do oppose His glory or our salvation, or our own or our neighbour's real good."

RICHARD BAXTER: *Christian Directory.* Pt. I., ch. vii.

"Baseness and villany immediately raise indignation, somewhat of a desire that they should be punished. . . . Resentment against vice and wickedness is one of the common bonds by which society is held together; . . . and it does not appear that this, generally speaking, is at all too high amongst mankind. . . . It is, not only innocent, but a generous movement of the mind."—BP. BUTLER: *Sermon on Resentment.*

"Anger at sin is not evil; but we should feel only pity for the sinner."—WESLEY: *On Ephesians* iv. 26.

"There is an anger of holy love in God, and in men of God."—DR. RUDOLPH STIER.

"Justice is a craving of our nature, and rests in the punishment of the guilty as an end desirable in itself."

CANON MOZLEY: *Ruling Ideas.*

"I have yet to discover that indignation against wrong is aught but righteous, noble, and divine. The flush of rage and scorn which rises, and ought to rise, in every honest heart when we see a woman or a child ill-used, a poor man wronged or crushed—What is that but the inspiration of Almighty God? What is that but the likeness of Christ? Woe to the man who can stand coolly by, and see wrong done

without a shock, or a murmur, or even more, to the very limits of the just laws of this land. He may think it a fine thing so to do; a proof that he is an easy, prudent man of the world, and not a meddlesome enthusiast. But all that it does prove is—That the Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of justice and judgment, has departed from him."

CANON KINGSLEY: *David.*

"Be ye angry, and sin not. Anger in itself is not sinful. Christ, whose perfection is the root and law of ours, was sometimes angry. It would be sinful not to be kindled to indignation by baseness, treachery, cruelty, and hypocrisy. But anger must not be suffered to break out into violence. It must be kept within the control of conscience and of reason. It must not be poisoned by malignity, or degenerate into revenge. And the heat, the agitation, of it must be soon repressed."—R. W. DALE: *Lectures on the Ephesians.*

NOTE B.

"What is the reason that so few retain the perfect love of God after they have received it?

"The main reason is this, that they do not continue to show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. The graces of the Spirit are not kept in exercise. They turn their eye from Jesus, their aspirations and hopes from things heavenly, their affections from God. They fall into evil reasoning, into stillness and reservedness, and that very subtle practical antinomianism which consists in separating the life of faith from the walk of faith. Not using the grace received as a sacred talent, and seeking to form the character thereby. Do not take up the cross statedly and of set purpose; are not content with their providential lot. Do not submit to the order of God, in poverty, in reproach, in affliction. Do not seek a fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. As the elect of God, do not put on meekness, gentleness, humbleness of mind, and over all, charity as the bond of perfection. As the soldiers of Christ, do not put on the whole armour of God. Do not pray with all prayer, and watch thereunto with all perseverance."

The above extract is from the Appendix to *The Life of John Birchenhall, M.R.C.S., F.L.S.*, a man of rare intellectual

gifts and extensive learning, concerning whom, moreover, the Rev. Dr. Rigg declares: "If ever there was a Christian who was continually going on to perfection, and who came as near to his goal as, according to our lights, a 'man in Christ' may come, such was, I believe, John Birchenhall." *The Life*, written by the Rev. A. J. French, B.A., is worthy of its subject.

Appendix.

REPLIES TO QUERIES.

I.

"In Philippians iii. 12, St. Paul says he does not consider himself 'already perfect;' and in verse 15 he exhorts, 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.' Are there two kinds of perfection? If so, how is each to be attained?"

The word "perfect" is used in relation to Christians as describing (1.) Those who, fully believing in Jesus, and being thus cleansed from all sin, are "made perfect in love" (1 John iv. 17, 18). (2.) Those who have made such advancement in the Divine life as to be, to a considerable extent, matured in piety. (3.) Those who are now with Christ, "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23). (4.) The redeemed on the resurrection-morn, whose bodies will then be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, and who will be exalted to sit with Him on His throne.

In Philippians iii. 15 the word appears to be employed in the second application, while in the 12th verse the fourth meaning is evidently intended. The distinction is accurately pointed out in Mr. Wesley's version. He renders verse 12, "Not that I have already attained, or am already *perfected*;" ver. 13, "Let us therefore, as many as *are perfect*, be thus minded." And his note on the first passage further shows it. "There is," says he, "a difference between one that is perfect, and one that is *perfected*. The one is fitted for the race (verse 15); the other ready to receive the prize."

The hope of the Christian—the final resurrection —was before the apostle's mind. He knew how this sublime event would involve to all believers consequences of surpassing happiness and glory. He therefore declares how eagerly he follows after this prize. To be made ready for it, *perfected*, is always the object of his intense desire and strenuous pursuit. He will live holily, that he may at last have "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Christ's eternal glory."

Those to whom he appeals in the 15th verse are such as are no longer mere babes in knowledge and grace, but rather adult believers—"fathers" in Christ, to use St. John's term. No Christian virtue in these is now merely in its imperfect beginning or undeveloped germs; all have acquired a certain ripeness and maturity. The light is no longer dimmed or shaded by remaining unbelief or sin, neither "clear nor dark" (Zech. xiv. 6); it shines with unsullied and steady radiance. They are such as "are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. v. 14). Hence they think and feel as St. Paul had been declaring himself to think and feel—they are "thus minded."

Such maturity cannot, of course, be attained suddenly, and at once. It is the work of time. But in order to it we must, as a first and essential preparation, be *sanctified wholly;* and *this* we shall be as soon as we dare to believe in Him who saves to the uttermost. The sick child could be healed in a moment by Jesus' touch, and so made perfectly whole; still its full development, its growing up to manly strength, must be gradual. Reason may suddenly return to the diseased mind, and without it knowledge cannot be obtained; yet the actual acquisition of full and complete information can be made only by prolonged effort.

To be perfectly cleansed, the child of God has need only to come, *with this special intent*, to the blood of sprinkling. To attain to maturity of Christian character, to the perfection of the saints now in heaven, and to the glory of the resurrection,

we must "continue in the faith, grounded and settled." We must practise all righteousness. We must "walk" in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. We must "endure hardness." St. Paul's motto must be ours—"This one thing I do."

II.

"A GIRL of nineteen who has lately received the blessing of holiness wishes to know if the stories written by such writers as Emma J. Worboise, Marie Hall, A. L. O. E., C. Prentiss, Mrs. Wetherell, Emma Leslie, the author of *John Halifax*, and others of that class, are likely to be a hindrance to the growth of the Divine life in her soul. As this is almost her only recreation, she is anxious to know if the reading of such works will be harmful."

To many a hard toiler, especially in brainwork and amid worry and care, works of fiction may bring welcome and most serviceable relief. They afford that change of occupation for the mind which gives it needed rest. On such grounds the reading of them may be "*lawful*." One of our most eminent statesmen secures sleep after having left the House of Commons by passing an hour with the productions of poets and novelists. A dear friend of the present writer, who spends and is spent in making the Saviour known, finds such reading a true diversion for his often sorely taxed brain, and thus even a help to spiritual growth.

But it may *not* be "*expedient*" for some. It is not, if it consume too much time and money; if it incapacitate, or at least indispose, for the graver duties of life; if it engender inanity or frivolity of mind; if it jar with religious exercises. The Christian who is conscious that he cannot indulge in this literature without such consequences following may have totally to abstain from it. This surely is the teaching of our Lord. The hand, the foot, the eye are meant for profit and enjoyment; but if for some

reason they are occasions of sin, then must they be cut off or plucked out. What cannot be practised without harm to the spiritual nature owing to some peculiarity or perverseness of the mental constitution, what cannot be brought under proper control, must be promptly and altogether abandoned. So the missionary in China whose experience was not long since given in a magazine, and the Sunday-school teacher who told of her "settled peace," both found it.* And in the latter case God at once, in condescending mercy, took away the desire; and she could have said, with Augustine, "How sweet did it at once become to me to want the sweetness of those toys; and what I feared to be parted from was now a joy to part with. . . . Thou castedst them forth; and for them enteredst in Thyself, sweeter than all pleasure."

This is not a direct and categorical answer to the question of our young correspondent. For, in truth, such an answer cannot be given. Only she herself can determine whether the reading described is "likely to be a hindrance to the growth of the Divine life in her soul." Let her honestly, and as before God, answer to herself such questions as these: Does this reading cost more than is given away for religious and charitable purposes? Are all, or nearly all, my leisure hours spent in it? Is it indulged when sleep, so absolutely needful to bodily and mental soundness, should be sought? Does it produce an unhealthy tone of mind, causing other admittedly excellent books to seem tame and vapid, making me discontented with my lot, impatient of common and every-day duties, and prone to romancing, castle-building, and the like? Do I find myself reluctant to lay down the story for Bible study and communion with God? Does it diminish my zest for the means of grace, and work for God and souls? Do I seriously doubt whether it is right *for me*, whatever may be the case with others? If these questions, or any of them, have to be answered in the affirmative, *then to give up the practice would*

* See *The King's Highway* for 1882, pp. 369, 414.

seem a necessity for her spiritual welfare. And if this course do not seem an incumbent duty, yet the reading must be subordinated to the highest ends, and "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Our friend says it is almost her only recreation. Could she not find recreation in other ways? And if reading be the chief recreation, the purpose would be answered by a different class of books, such as would really interest her, brace her intellect, enlarge her sphere of knowledge, and promote her growth in grace. Where fiction, even of the best sort and religious in tendency, forms the staple of reading, it is sure sooner or later to lower the tone of the mind, impair the moral sensibilities, and enervate the character.

On the whole subject let these passages be prayerfully pondered; *viz.*, Matthew xviii. 8, 9; Romans xiv. 5, 14, 22, 23; 1 Corinthians vi. 12, x. 31.

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